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Dedicated to all seekers of truth

About my book:

As a young law student I became aware of the numerous falsifications of the church, became familiar with the Moon sect and its practices and was so shaken by the lack of truthfulness of those who believe in God that I decided to seek the truth myself. In my long and adventurous search through all sorts of subject areas I encountered prejudices of all kinds and finally discovered that people mainly lose sight of the truth due to the thick fog of so much prejudice.

In an exciting and easily understandable form I criticise the church and show that a being which demands belief, calls upon people to murder, destroy and enslave other peoples, cannot be God, but only a demon.

I try to show that those people who do not believe in a God are also believers, but that they believe in chance, money and power, and I point out that genuine realisation can only be found through a sincere, open and unprejudiced search for the truth.

Alongside many years of self-employed work as a programmer, I particularly like to explore questions related to the natural sciences. I was able to confirm that the view that everything is spirit is right. I succeeded in discovering that spirit is spaceless and how it »functions«. In the same way that worlds can be created and can fade away again on computer screens or in dreams, spirit can to a certain extent also make worlds appear and disappear out of »nothing«.

As a scientifically-thinking person I am of course aware that my thoughts can only be a first step in the right direction. As there has been little or no fundamental research, in the spiritual arena we are now there where Kepler, Galilei and Newton were a few centuries ago in the natural sciences.

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Introduction

I attended private classes to obtain my high school diploma, and later, when I studied law at the University of Vienna, I had to rely on my own resources again and attended evening courses at a private school. The curriculum of the first part of my studies also included canon law and church history, and the lecturer continually amazed me with his discourses on the numerous falsifications and the lack of authentic works. It was wholly incomprehensible to me that the church was teaching things as the **truth** that theologians have long known to be falsifications and tendentious literature.

After passing my First State Examinations, I attended, probably because I had become curious, one of the lectures of a »Society for the Unification of World Christianity«, which took place in a rented room at the University of Vienna. At that time I did not have any idea about sects and thus thought I would be able to have sensible discussions with the pleasant young people who had come to the lecture. A young, very nice girl, fifteen years old at the most, was immediately introduced to me as a kind of »minder«. After the lecture I accepted an invitation to join a discussion of the group. I was astonished to learn that a certain Mr. Moon from Korea had come to this world as a new Messiah in order to successfully complete the mission in which Christ had failed. I was soon to find out that they were not speaking about a unification of Christianity at all but about a new version under the leadership of this Mr. Moon. Their worst enemy was »evil Communism«, which was roundly condemned. Some elements of the so-called »Divine Principles« which this group disseminated seemed highly childish and ridiculous to me, and some of their explanations of history did not correspond to what I had learned in canon law. So I raised my objections and for the first time in my life I realized how friendly and apparently truth-loving people can listen reverently without heeding a single word.

After I had joined in several of their discussions and trips, the head of the group invited me to his office and explained to me that now the time had come to make a decision. He asked me either to move in with the group and work for them or to refrain from attending their meetings in the future. This inhumane request for mental and physical servitude came as an enormous surprise and shock. On the one hand because I came from the provinces – my parents were mountain farmers – and I had not yet come across this kind of brutality; on the other hand because I liked the young girl and did not want to lose her.

At that time I already felt that Moon, as a new Messiah, was not at all harmless. In each and every breath he spoke about love, but his kind of love obviously seemed to come to an end as soon as he encountered differently-minded people, in particular communists, whom he considered as a new force for evil. People who followed the thoughts of the new sect were good and useful, those who thought differently – or maybe even sympathised with communism – were evil and satanic. A phrase that I once heard somewhere kept hammering in my brain: "If you do not want to be my brother, you must be my enemy." No, and no again. I would never sell my soul at any price!

In this way my search for the truth began. Other painful disappointments followed, I even changed my plans for my future and completed my law degree.

For many years I searched in the maze of religious doctrines and studied various fields until it finally became clear to me why people are wandering around as if in a fog and do not even know what they are, where they come from and where they go to after their time on Earth has come to an end.

At first I spent a great deal of time in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. The members of the sect had raved about spiritual experiences and claimed that it was possible to talk to the dead. They fasted for some days and experienced something. Of course I tried it myself, too, and after three days of abstaining from eating and drinking I discovered forces within myself that somehow seemed to spin around. I clearly felt how some of them were significantly greater than my body and how they entered and left me so that I could sense their dimension from the time between their leaving and re-entering my body. Only much later did I learn that these powers are well-known as chakras in Far Eastern philosophy.

At the National Library I found numerous books about the spiritual dialogue with the hereafter. It seemed to me that some works had by no means been written by lunatics, and were open and sincere. I also found a so-called Factual Report, which soon captivated me because it seemed extraordinarily nice, frank and earnest and because it answered the question about how life had evolved in a scientific spirit. I visited the publisher, an elderly gentleman, and soon realised that he could not have written this factual report. So I visited the so-called medium, a man who at that time was already over eighty and was a former tram driver in Vienna. He was a nice man who told me how he had been trained as a medium and how he had functioned as a writing medium for a long time. He described to me how during the night his hand had started to write of its own accord, and how he found numerous pages in the morning which had been written by his hand and whose contents amazed him. To my mind the factual report could not have been a product of his mind either.

In the factual report, the author claimed that his name was John and that he had been a disciple of Christ. He had been instructed by beings of the other world, notably by Christ's disciples, to write the report for mankind's sake and to disseminate it through a medium. He explained that Christ had described the God of the Jews as evil and had therefore been persecuted by them. All records of Christ's disciples had been destroyed by the falsifiers and had been replaced by misleading assertions. He, John, wrote down in the factual report what Christ really had said and taught.

The factual report captivated me more and more the longer I dealt with it. For example, it was claimed that Christ had descended from the Essenes and not from the Jews. *In actual fact some years later numerous scrolls were found in Qumran on the Dead Sea from which it may be assumed that Christ actually descended from the Essenes.*

Everything would have worked out well and I might have become a fervent supporter of this report if I had been more of a 'believer'. As it was, I could not stop reflecting on every unclear or obviously incorrect statement. To my surprise I found a second factual report which in some chapters differed significantly from the first one. How – for God's sake! – could it be possible that there were two different versions of a true factual report transmitted from the hereafter?! Naïve as I still was at that time, I was unable to digest this fact. It took up an

enormous amount of my time and caused a great deal of inner restlessness until one day in a fit of desperation I threw the whole factual report into the fire.

I had been able to get rid of the book by burning it, but I was not able to erase it from my memory. The thoughts kept hammering in my brain and I had to reconsider and examine each of them over and over again until I finally managed to understand the inconsistencies, keeping the good aspects and accepting the disappointing ones.

Not long after finishing my law studies and a few years after burning the report, I became a youth worker in an home for problem children because I wanted »to do something good« in the spirit of the factual report. I soon became familiar with this job and eagerly studied the CVs of the children and teenagers who lived in the home. I was soon to experience another disappointment when I gradually realized that bringing up children and young people in a home like that was simply impossible. How could one house hundreds of children and teenagers from difficult families in a barrack-like building and take care of them with far too few carers? Weren't the youth workers overtaxed? Could they even come close to giving the children and young people the feeling they needed so badly for a more or less satisfactory development? One day I dared to ask one of the staff why he had appeared to start his night shift only ten minutes before it ended. But he did not consider it necessary to give any explanation to a young colleague like myself. So I decided to make an entry in the log book, especially because this youth worker used to like to make disparaging remarks about the young people. The director of the home was delighted about my apparent courage, while the other staff were outraged and after previously calling me »dear Mr. Sauerschnig« they now began to ignore me in a way that would have been worthy of a film. What I unfortunately had not known was that the member of staff about whom I had made a comment in the register had been playing cards and drinking with colleagues.

Having learnt from this bitter experience, I left my job as a youth worker and became self-employed in a profession in which I had never worked before, but for which I was granted a trade license due to my qualifications obtained through my high school diploma. I set up a copy shop, started off by taking on all kinds of clerical work and over time bought printing, copying and typesetting machines and even a process camera. When after a few years I also bought a computer, it seemed natural to me to write my own programs, so then other companies came to ask me to optimize their computer programs or even to write new ones for them. When a salesman expressed his intention to put my programs on offer at a trade fair for office equipment, I decided to change my job again. I moved to the Waldviertel region and set up a software company.

However, I not only did programming work, I also sold hardware and taught computer courses at an educational institute offering adult courses for high school graduation. I studied the structure of computers, their functions and basic programs and increasingly came to understand what it meant to have ideas and to use these ideas for bringing a machine into being. I compared the programs with biological processes and realized certain similarities. In this way I delved into studies of biology and physics to find out about the correlations.

Soon after having started my search for the truth, I began to ponder on how different worlds could exist alongside each other. If the hereafter exists – I said

to myself – there has to be an answer to the question of how two or even more worlds could exist parallel to each other. At that time, however, I was still very much influenced by the thoughts contained in the factual report and was generally not able to see things more clearly.

The factual report described in an impressive way that everything is spirit, whereby spirit should be considered as a force (energy). Many other reports and treatises also suggested that everything was spirit. Einstein indirectly confirmed theories of the other world that suggest that matter (mass) is only a form of energy (of spirit). Only many years later did I understand that energy as well as space, colours and shapes could only be the *effects* of spirit.

Today I am convinced that *everything is spirit* and that everything which exists is founded on spirit's expressions of will.

With my increasing doubts about whether the factual report was right, I relinquished my belief in the existence of an *omniscient* and *all-powerful* God (which Yahweh claims to be). Above all I came to understand that it was impossible to actively grasp several processes happening at the same time and still be fully aware of all of them. Think about a particularly intelligent person and compare him or her to a simple person. Where is the difference between the two? The difference is that the especially perceptive person is able to act in a more imaginative way than an unimaginative person. *Both, however, can only do one thing at a time.* Reading, writing, singing, watching television, cooking, observing animals etc. cannot be done at the same time by even the most intelligent person.

If it is in the nature of consciousness that it can handle only one item after the other, there cannot be any creature that is omniscient and that can at the same time align its consciousness with all things and living beings, with all the worlds and billions of galaxies. Because they cannot correspond to reality, such excessive ideas only lead to many people rejecting the concept of a »spiritual almighty« out of hand, although one can easily perceive that nature and the universe function according to intelligent principles.

The fact that there is more than what we actually perceive became well aware to me through a personal experience. One day I was going to Amaliendorf together with Christine and her two children. Christine was driving the car and I was sitting next to her in the front. Suddenly a strong sensation that we might be involved in a crash with another car took hold of me, although there was no vehicle to be seen. And sure enough, a few minutes later a car appeared approaching us head-on in our lane. Just before we collided the driver swerved to prevent a crash. How could I have sensed that there was a vehicle approaching that represented a danger to us? It could not have been a mere illusion, as Christine's son told me afterwards that he had felt a similarly strange sensation too.

Certain dreams have also made a great impression on me. In the first years in which I intensively sought the truth and had many unanswered questions, I often dreamed the answer to my questions and awoke exactly at a certain time. It even happened to me that I did not wake up myself but was only woken up by some other noise, e.g. a child shouting. When I looked at the clock it was

exactly the same time again. One day when I again had many unresolved questions, I dreamed again – but this time I dreamed that from that time on I would no longer dream and that I would have to go my own way. Since that time the dreams stopped and I no longer wake up at a certain time, even though I have often wished to do so.

Of course these are personal experiences which, however, may be taken seriously even from a scientific point of view. I am firmly convinced that many people have various spiritual experiences but do not talk about them for fear of being laughed at.

On television I have seen how a shaman had his tongue cut off and how then the piece which had been cut off immediately grew onto the stump again. Running over hot coals without burning one's feet may not be proof of the existence of spirit. But all these facts and experiences are clear indicators that there is more than we are currently willing to admit.

In the course of the many years in which I have been active as a businessman I have employed numerous people and as a systems programmer have gained insight into hundreds of companies. I have learned about people's strengths, but also about their weaknesses and faults and have enjoyed wheeling and dealing. I have tried to write user-friendly, self-explanatory programs to help people in business. In my job I have learned about existing limits and the rafts of laws which have to be made for a society like ours. In a country in which everyone tries to get as much as possible for themselves, there will never be enough for everyone, and the Government will always be illiquid despite technological progress. In a community in which the strong try to grow even stronger by cleverly investing their money and letting it work for them, and in a community in which humans can set up boundaries which nobody is allowed to cross without asking permission, there will always be privileged and disadvantaged people, and poor, hungry and starving people. As long as rich people can become even richer not through the work of their own hands but through speculation, and as long as people with certain opportunities can multiply their money rapidly, while others are paid next to nothing for their work, there will always be regions, continents and population groups who have to »live« in anxiety and poverty, and near to starvation. In such an unjust world, new ideologies will always develop which claim the right to take away the advantages of others by force. War, misery and tears are the consequences.

It is clear to all non-primitive people that living together in harmony is only possible with a *truthful spirit and love*. Nobody needs to stand up and cry out how evil and nasty human beings are and how they are unable to love others. It is not that simple. In Paradise it may be easy to sing hallelujah and smile all day long, but here on Earth we live in conditions which more often make us cry than sing.

Many of our most serious problems are due to the laws of nature of the world into which we are born. We come into this world helpless and totally dependent on our parents; and we leave it again tired and worn out. Between arriving and leaving we strive to get ahead, we seek security, recognition and a certain degree of satisfaction of our needs and wishes.

As a father and youth worker I have never met bad children, only highly prejudiced adults. Maybe there is such a thing as really bad children, and maybe some people are wicked by nature, but I have never experienced it. The so-called difficult children with whom I lived for some time were problem children because they grew up in unbearable conditions; for me they did not represent any proof that humans can be evil by nature and that they are born with original sin as the church suggests.

Our prejudices are detailed, and very often we do not even see them as prejudices. The way adults expect children to act and to be is often a disgrace, and makes children into what they are when grown up. They begin to believe in all kinds of nonsense and have to bear a heavy burden of prejudices until some of them break down under the load.

Take a look at the things which are so important to us! The constraints imposed on us begin when we are born and only end when we die. How much knowledge children have to acquire! If they are not sufficiently gifted, they get bad marks at school, as if a less gifted child was somehow worse than a naturally gifted one. Instead of promoting their abilities, we heap knowledge onto them, which aims to facilitate their access to the next stage of constraints, their job. But then it really gets going: producing, earning money, increasing turnover and productivity, paying taxes, outsmarting competitors, modernizing, automating, growing bigger and bigger and even bigger until we head for sheer madness. Those who are not productive enough are removed, compensated with unemployment benefit and removed to the sidings like old and worn-out locomotives.

Why do we talk so much about unemployment? Is there really not enough work or just not enough well-paid work?

Since Darwin impressively showed us that evolution is based on a successful fight for survival, the strongest and most cunning have taken this as confirmation that in this fight for survival one can use all available means in order to gain advantages. Thinking of one's own advantages has spread like a weed, and nowadays it is natural that everyone thinks about his or her own benefits first. Whenever we do something, we ask ourselves what profit or benefit we will gain from it. Everyone sells him- or herself as well as he or she can, everyone tries to get as much as possible from the Government, i.e. from the community.

When people start feeling guilty, many of them develop into real masters of putting unpleasant things to the back of their minds or reinterpreting them. They create theories and justify whatever requires justification. Many accept decorations and titles and orientate themselves towards supposed role models, people who live in beautiful houses, have yachts, wear beautiful clothes and spend more in a day than many families do in a year.

So what about this claim that we live in the best of all possible worlds?

The fact is that this world is far from being the best of all possible worlds. In reality it is cruel and tough and forces us into repulsive and disgusting behaviour.

Is there anything worse than the fact that a living being can only exist at the expense of another creature?

In the factual report Christ offers us beautiful words »A living being serves another through charity«. Nice words for the one who is eating, but not for the one who is being eaten.

I refuse to accept the fact that we somehow constantly lie to ourselves and go through life as large or small hypocrites. Let us accept things as they are and refrain from continuously concealing them behind all sorts of lies, which only makes things even worse.

Many people talk about the truth, and mean that which they themselves consider the truth. Many talk about justice and mean that which seems pleasant to them. Many believe in God, but this is a God of their beliefs. He has to be and act in a way which they themselves consider right and proper.

In this way a spiritual morass and an ignorance about life can be created from which there seems to be no way out. Truth, however, has above all got to do with **veracity**, sincerity, openness and charity. If we really want to find out what is behind life and not to be content with beliefs of all sorts – even if they are scientifically packaged – we first need to act sincerely, to start eliminating our prejudices and to know ourselves.

It is obvious that our little world is one of contrasts, a world in which people of different spiritual convictions can live together in order to learn from each other and to mature. It is not a paradise; it never was and never will be, because its meaning and purpose are different from that which those who invoke revelations and divine orders believe in.

After my long search for the truth I have come to be convinced that not everything is coincidence. However, we will only understand the meaning of life and gain insight into spiritual processes when we start to understand spirit and ourselves, when we move on from our current spiritual level and devote ourselves to truth and charity.

Part I

General Remarks

In the first part of my work I would like to tell my readers where I come from and how I came to seek the truth.

The Moon Organization, whose meetings I attended for a while, serves as an example to show the dangers emanating from sects and cults and at the same time to explain why so many people end up in sects and why these sects are so successful.

From the factual report, which I studied extensively, I would like to demonstrate that considerable errors can be made even where there is good will, longing for the truth and honest intentions. The combination of certain circumstances and facts as well as the immaturity of the time may be enough to induce humans to draw false conclusions and do the wrong things. I would also like to show from the factual report that there may be other explanations why no authentic works by and about Christ exist and why so many documents were falsified and predated.

Finally I would like to quote critical voices such as Joachim Kahl and Gustav Wyneken, who have investigated and described the basics of the Church and its work. I deem it necessary to criticize the mentality of the Church once again. The time has come to finally throw the predominant ideas about faith overboard and to strive for coexistence in a truthful spirit.

Furthermore, I would like to present books that discuss the exploration of the spirit and of spiritual phenomena in a scientific way. These works are clear signs that the questions of life and a life after death can also be discussed objectively and free from religious ideas.

Finally, I attach importance to bringing to the reader's attention to personalities who in the past sought the truth and worked for the benefit of mankind. These people may serve as models of a love for truth and for our neighbors and as examples of the fact that great spirits are faced with problems, may also be subject to the natural limits of earthly life and thus may be mistaken too.

The Years Before My Search for the Truth

My parents were mountain farmers in the Saualpe mountains in Carinthia. My father, born in 1895, was already fifty years old when I was born, and I remember him dearly. He was a brilliant storyteller and a popular entertainer, a progressive man and a good father. On long winter evenings he had to recount over and over again his experiences during the two World Wars, and we children, the neighbors or friends, listened to him carefully when he told us about his imprisonment in Russia, the cold winters and his attempts to help his fellow prisoners, his escape, his deployment on the home front during World War II and his adventures with partisans.

My three brothers, my sister and I attended the elementary school in Greutschach. The nearest secondary modern school was in Griffen, a two-hour walk away, so none of the children actually considered attending it. When I was ten years old I badly wanted to attend this secondary school although I had hardly heard anything about it. My parents advised me not to go there, but finally gave in. However, it was not long before I had to return to the elementary school, because I simply could not afford to buy the things I needed, and so I did not own the book from which the English teacher examined me after a fortnight's time. Besides, I repeatedly felt sick at that time so that I burst into tears when the English teacher, who was totally unaware of my troubles, failed me.

As the first-born son, my older brother Erich was supposed to take over my parents' farm. My younger brother Richard was lucky, because our priest sent him to Tanzenberg to be trained as a priest (although this never happened). And according to my parents' wishes I, the second child, should marry into some farm. But even when I was a boy there was something in me that I still cannot fully explain. On the gate of the churchyard I saw a poster proclaiming that »late starters« still had opportunities to make their way. When I was fifteen years old I wanted to take my chance and work in retailing. While I was shopping, my future boss asked me whether I wanted to go into the retail trade. I was immediately enthusiastic and urged my parents to let me go. Finally it actually happened, I became an apprentice, and on my first day I had the chance to pick currants. Later I often did some odd jobs for my boss and helped him with some bricklaying work. Although I was quite successful in my job, I took the first opportunity that arose to make a change.

During my apprenticeship I attended a typewriting course and often studied the posters of »Maturaschule Dr. Roland«, a school that advertised the opportunity to obtain a high-school diploma via evening courses. But as I did not have enough money to finance it, I decided to wait and tried to have myself drafted into the army as soon as possible. I was sent to Villach and later to the Military Headquarters in Klagenfurt, where I was placed in the office of the Company Commander because I had a good command of typing and knew how to touch-type.

At that time I enrolled at Dr. Roland's school, received textbooks, studied English and Latin, mathematics and German. I decided to stay in an office job within the army for some years, but wanted to be transferred to Vienna. Although I explained my reasons to the Commander, he rejected my request because he wanted to keep me in his office. So, without really being aware of it at that time, I became acquainted for the first time with nepotism and opportunism. I shared my room with a soldier who had good contacts to the school inspector and who supported my cause via his political party in the Ministry of Defense. But as the Minister belonged to another party, his intervention »only« resulted in my transfer to Group Command I in Vienna. Briefly after my transfer to the Group Command, the Commander called me into his room - I still do not know exactly why he did so - and asked me whether I had certain friends in a certain party. I told him the truth and also mentioned that my father was a farmer and had actually always voted for that other party. Only shortly afterwards I was moved to the Ministry of Defense and was employed in the office of a Major from Carinthia who understood and supported me.

Within about three years I passed my high school finals, but I was under such strain that I had to hold my cup with both hands so as not to spill my coffee. Even several months after the exams I still dreamed about them and in the mornings I woke up and was no longer sure whether or not I had actually passed them. What was even worse was that at that time my father died in sad circumstances so that I often dreamed about him. I dreamed that he was with us again, how he lived and died again...

My contract with the army expired, and I found myself a job in personnel accounting. I started to study law because I wanted to become a judge or a human resources manager of a big company, and because I could hardly see any other opportunities to study. After one year I passed the first of three state examinations. The subjects examined also comprised Canon Law and Church history.

I attended a private school offering law courses. The teacher was a somewhat amusing man who well understood how to point out and explain in a rather witty manner all the inconsistencies of the church. He talked about falsifications and even more falsifications and I could hardly believe my ears. I could not understand that priests talked about truth while knowing full well that all these falsifications existed and keeping quiet about all the other circumstances. But as this was none of my concern, I would probably have put these contradictions aside and would not have bothered about them any longer if I had not come across the Moonies.

My Encounter with the Moon Organization

On an evening in February 1970, as I was on my way to Vienna University, I met a group of young people in front of the university building. Some of them quickly approached me and asked me whether I was interested in attending a lecture of the »Association for Unification of World Christianity«. I said yes. Briefly afterwards I was introduced to a young girl named Sylvia. She would inform me about the activities of the group and answer my questions.

I can no longer remember in detail what exactly was discussed in the lecture. After the lecture Sylvia asked me whether I wanted to accompany her and her friends to the headquarters of the Association for Unification of World Christianity for a chance to get together and have some discussion. I accepted the invitation, joined them and was surprised by the warmth and open-heartedness of these young people. Only the head of the group, Peter Koch, who was a bit older, seemed somewhat different from the others.

We sat around a big table; tea and I think also coffee was served and I was told about a Korean named *Moon* who at the age of sixteen had had a vision. Jesus had appeared to him on Easter morning and had instructed him to complete his mission that had failed 2000 years ago. For seven years Moon struggled with himself before becoming fully aware of his mission and the contents of his faith. Lonely, he wandered through the mountains, prayed, cried and experienced the reality of spiritual powers and beings, especially of Satan. Finally Moon was arrested by the Communists, sent to prison and tortured. As he

was given hardly any food, he nearly starved, but he withstood his tormentors and received spiritual assistance. After he had finally recognized himself fully as the Second Messiah and the Third Adam, he married the eighteen-year-old *Han* and founded the *True Marriage* with her, the kind of marriage that God had wanted and established with Adam and Eve after Creation. Moon and his Han considered themselves as the »True Parents«, and in the community of who believed in Moon the »True Family« would slowly grow. Through Moon's knowledge and the True Parents children would from that time on be born without original sin.

They all sat there and listened carefully, most obviously deeply moved. Some of them even had tears in their eyes. What terrible struggles this brave man had had to endure! I have to admit that I was impressed too.

I was given a book entitled »Divine Principles«, which I was asked to read. I took it and assured them that I would certainly study it.

I repeated my visits to the group and was particularly pleased to see Sylvia again. She was a simple, warm-hearted and very nice girl, totally unspoilt, frank and honest. I soon found out that she too was pleased to meet me again.

However, I could not identify at all with the »Divine Principles«. They contained strange stories about God and Creation, none of them more intelligent than those I knew from the Bible. God had not created the world out of his own free creative will, but out of necessity. God needed a counterpart so that his energy could pulsate and his love could be reflected. Adam and Eve's task should have been to form a perfect, sin-free counterpart to the Divine. But unfortunately there was *Lucifer*, the archangel who had assisted God in Creation. He felt neglected and no longer loved by God who had come to like Adam and Eve. So he intruded into the Garden of Eden and initiated the process »of give and take« with the young, only fifteen-year-old Eve by seducing her into »fornication«. So Man, who henceforth bore evil children, became sinful, and Lucifer became Satan.

After these dramatic events God had no other choice but to devise a plan of how to re-establish the original condition. Moon – who else? – was assigned a key role, all streams of development were to meet in his person. Moon tried to make God's plans clear by dividing history into various periods with the most important one lasting for 400 years, starting in 1520 (the Reformation) and ending in 1920 (the year in which Moon was born).

Jesus, as a second Adam, would have had the task of forming the basis for a new mankind together with a second Eve. But he had *completely misunderstood* his assignment, did not enter into any relationships with women, did not marry an Eve and did not procreate any sin-free children either.

We discussed all these things for a long time. Sometimes I found it hard to suppress my smiles at their pious tales; sometimes I got upset and could not understand why my arguments were not taken seriously. And there was one hopelessly stupid story that I will never forget although I cannot remember every single detail. It said that Moses would have been able to redeem mankind if he had not forgotten to hit a certain spot with his stick at a certain time!

How could these young people, most of them students like myself, digest such nonsense, I kept asking myself. But whenever I emphasized that a God could not be like that, they kept quiet, but probably not because they felt caught out, but because they doubted my maturity.

One day Sylvia said to me when I was alone with her, "Johann, be careful, in our group not everything is as it seems to be!" Sylvia had come to the group together with her two sisters; her parents did not care very much for her. She told me about her home and her troubles. Whenever I was with her I felt happy.

Some weeks passed. Sometimes my brother Richard, who studied economics and to whom I felt very much attached, joined me and went with me to the group. On Sundays the group celebrated services with songs and recitals. Once the group took me with them to a »branch« of the organization, and everywhere I went I met joy and warm-heartedness.

One day Peter, the head of the group, called me into his small office and said to me "Johann, you have already been with us for quite some time and you know what we want. You have to make a decision now. Either stay and work with us or leave the group forever!"

I was very much surprised, turned pale and struggled for words. "You can't demand that from me! *I am searching for the **truth***. But so far I have not been able to find the truth in your group. I cannot accept your Divine Principles as divine, and what you claim does not correspond to what I learned when studying church history!"

Peter looked at me and did not show any sign of changing his decision. Had he perhaps seen how much I liked Sylvia? Did he assume that I would certainly not abandon her?

"No, you can't buy me, you can't enslave me." My thoughts raced. "I have been searching for the **truth** and not for a relatively satisfactory place. I wouldn't dream of letting myself be captured here and now!"

So I stood up and went away.

This sentence, which I had once heard somewhere, was hammering in my brain "If you do not want to be my brother, you must be my enemy." I was beside myself and felt totally destroyed. I could not understand how people could do that to each other. Why did I have to leave them and abandon my new friends? Why were these tales about God and Moon so important to them that they threw people who could not follow them out of the group?

I thought of Sylvia and my pain became even worse. How should I meet her again, talk to her again? She had already said »yes« to Moon, for her the »Day of Knowledge« was already over.

What should I do? Was I wrong and maybe too immature to understand Moon and his teachings?

I thought about what I had learned in church history. How could these embarrassing falsifications have happened? How was it possible that my parents did not know anything about them and our priest had never talked about them? There was so much that did not correspond to the truth! The Gospels were not written by the apostles, the Acts were written only after 100 A.D., and numerous »documents« were created and *predated*. The idea of the trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was only laid down in a synod in 325 A.D., a synod in which there was more quarrelling and fighting than discussion. The entire history of the Church was full of blood, disputes, and persecution of different-minded people, of torture, burning of witches, curses and damnations.

And now this experience with the Association for the Unification of World Christianity. Even the name was a deception! Nobody unified the Christians. They only pursued their own, new objectives.

I hurried to the National Library and searched for all kinds of books. Members of the group had assured me that it was possible to establish spiritual contacts to the dead and to experience all kinds of things. For this purpose they fasted for several or many days. Of course I tried it too, took everything very seriously and did not eat or drink anything for three days. Afterwards I felt certain energies that I had never felt before. They moved through my body, most obviously left it through my head and re-entered it from beneath my feet. And it seemed to me that there was more than just one of these movements. The movements themselves depended on my internal balance and could be influenced through my thoughts.

So I began to neglect my law studies and to dedicate myself more and more to the study of spiritual questions.

Moon and his Unification Movement

Twenty-five years after my contacts with the Association for the Unification of World Christianity, when I started writing this work, I found a book that described religious communities in a remarkably objective way. The »Handbook of Religious Communities«, published by Gütersloher Verlagshaus, considers the Moon Movement one of the *youth religions*, which have emerged in Europe and other highly developed regions all over the world since the late 1960s. The most conspicuous aspect these groups have in common is their *recruitment of teenagers and young adults* by offering them a »Divine Master« of absolute and divine authority and »saved families«. On page 819 of the book a description is given of a dramatic and rapid personality change that is frequently observed among the members. After the elimination of all criticism they show total devotion. The personality change and the ethnic and moral – sometimes quite unusual – reorientation often leads to social problems, to problems in their families, or even to conflicts with the law.

It is interesting to observe the glorification of their great and beloved master Moon by the members of the group – at least at the time when I attended it – compared to actual reality. And as far as I can judge, the methods and processes seem to be very similar in other cults.

The group saw in Moon and his wife the »*True Parents*«, parents which Adam and Eve supposedly were too before Eve's intercourse with Lucifer. However, it is a matter of fact that Moon married for the first time at the age of 26. In 1948 he was arrested because of sexual misdemeanors and charged with bigamy when he married his follower *Kim, Yong-On* and her husband denounced him. Moon was sentenced to five years in a work camp. In 1955 Moon was brought to court for a second time because of sexual offences. Only in 1960 did he establish the concept of the »*True Parents*« when marrying the 17-year old *Han, Hak-Ja* after his divorce from his third wife.

But Moon does not only fish for souls, he also set up companies all over the world. In 1959 he founded the company »*Yeohwa Shotgun*«, which started off as a manufacturer of air rifles and later, as *Tong Il Company Ltd.*, became the core of a huge industrial group. In the US he was sentenced to a 25 000-dollar fine and 18 months' imprisonment because of tax evasion. He started to serve his sentence in summer 1984, of which he served two thirds before being released due to good conduct.

When considering Mr. Moon's life, it becomes clear to a certain extent at which spiritual level Mr. Moon actually acts. He does not have any scruples about earning money by producing guns and considers it quite normal to damn different-minded people and above all Communists.

His followers worship Moon as »*Lord of the Second Coming*«, who will establish the »*Kingdom of Heaven on Earth*«, first in Korea and then worldwide. For Moon's followers Korea is considered the »*Holy Land*«. For the *Final Battle* between Satan and God, which is also referred to as Third World War, the *use of weapons* is not ruled out.

The possibility of a massive physical, i.e. military, conflict was repeatedly expressed "Once we have this strength here in America, then the ultimate enemy to overcome is the Soviet Union. The March to Moscow is going to be our motto. That new command begins today. We will fight with our lives to achieve the final victory." (»*Master Speaks, The Significance of 1 July 1973*«).

Moon does not only hate Communists, he also uses the fight against Communism as a tactical means. In his speech delivered on 28 December 1980 »*Thinking back historically*« Moon said "*Many of you might really wonder why I fight communism. The purpose is to bring all free nations and all religions into unity. By fighting against communism we can achieve that.*"

Whichever cult I had dealings with, they all *maneuvered, justified violence and claimed power in order to implement their objectives*. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses, who are particularly fervent followers of the desert God Yahweh, are literally steeped in destructive thoughts, which they, however, understand as constructive. New members are first provided with the most wonderful visions of their future to deprive them of their sound feeling for what is right and what is wrong. How fast this state of mind is reached depends on how strong the wish for security and satisfaction of their needs is, and on how much they are used and willing to accept the printed word without any criticism. Their own dreams of the future mingle with the wonderful pictures of the cult, and it does not take long until the new members start to defend the teachings. Then

even the most obvious nonsense and wickedness is considered as oh so necessary and inevitable and is defended to the last drop of blood.

Is Moon a Fraud? Are Masters like Moon Charlatans?

Well, it would be quite simple to brand Moon and his like as frauds, especially as it is obvious that they do betray people and know exactly where honesty ends and cunning begins. In reality, however, they are as much victims as their followers are, but on a different level.

Moon was born in a Christianized region of Korea. His parents, however, only became Christians in 1930. Nevertheless, Moon continued to attend a traditional Confucian school until 1934. According to the highly embellished stories about his life propagated by the movement – there is little reliable historical material – the young Moon was a religious seeker for whom his parents' joining Presbyterian Christianity did not provide a satisfactory answer to his own religious questions. During his search and due to his medial gifts (he also used himself as a medium), Jesus appeared to him. As a consequence Moon enhanced his religious endeavors and became a fanatical believer. Yahweh, the great omnipotent and omniscient God, became his ideal, and Moon began to interpret and understand the inconsistencies of the Bible in his own way. "Isn't it man who does not understand God?" he may have asked himself all over again. "Hasn't man failed again and again and thus destroyed God's good intentions? Didn't Adam and Eve, Moses and Jesus disregard the laws of God? Why else should this beautiful world still be so imperfect?"

A thought considered correct therefore results in a flood of new ideas, one illusion is followed by the next, and experiences confirm his supposed findings. Moon is imprisoned though he considers himself not guilty and thus treated unjustly. He soon came to hate everything emanating from the Communists, considered them pigs to whom he has to show the true power of his own great spirit. He laughs when they serve him inedible food which he refuses to take, and he grows when being tortured and humiliated by them. He, Moon, lives on the spiritual nourishment that his spiritual helpers provide.

So he, who was a good and helpful man at heart, decided to help this deeply fallen world and the sinful people living in it. For a long time he pondered the necessary ways and means, and he counted on God's assistance. He »realized« God's true intentions and discovered that the history of mankind is divided into certain periods of time which are characterized by the numbers three, four and seven and their multiples: from Adam to Noah 1600 years passed, from Noah to Abraham 400 years, the exile of the Popes lasted 210 years, and there were 400 years from 1520 to 1920, the year in which he was born.

Enraptured he murmured "Amazing, incredible, fantastic! Yes, that's it! The day of perfection is near, and it is *me* who has realized God's plan and will fulfill it!"

But the road from vision to fulfillment is long and stony. On his way he has to overcome ever-new obstacles, which he considers God's way of testing him. In

the Bible he finds the confirmation of his deeds. In a speech he gives to officials of his movement, he states "14 years after I began my public ministry, I performed the Holy Wedding - the marriage of the Lamb - that the Bible predicted (Revelation 19). In 1960, therefore, the first heavenly family was established upon the earth. That was equivalent in significance to the very moment of the crucifixion of Jesus... *I won the first and most important victory. I consummated the heavenly plan. This was the day that the heavenly son came to earth, restored the base, and welcomed the first bride of heaven.* Therefore, on this day God had His first true base on Earth from which He could continue to expand... However, in our movement, I am in a position to restore both the spiritual and the physical basis for paradise." («Master Speaks, The Significance of 1 July 1973«).

Moon, like so many before him, became a *victim of biblical visions*. He adopted similar thoughts and felt chosen and entrusted to overcome the supposed helpers of Satan - the Communists. Similarly to Moses, who slaughtered entire peoples on behalf of God, Moon sees in his visions how he, leading the huge crowd of his followers under God's insignia and blessing, defeats the Communists. After this battle eternal peace, established for Moon's glory, will reign on Earth.

To people who twist and misinterpret reality so much, all ways and means soon seem to be just and justified. Tax evasion no longer has the character of a criminal act if the money thus obtained is used for the salvation of souls. Going to prison is no longer considered a punishment but a sacrifice made for the sake of one's fellow men and women. Every reasonable thought, even the most convincing objections, is twisted and interpreted in such a way that it serves one's own purposes.

The Factual Report

Along with many other interesting books which I found in the National Library, I also came across a work which bore the title «Factual Report from the World of Eternity Addressed to All Peoples of the Earth» and which I will henceforth simply refer to as the «Factual Report». This book was written by a medium called *Griesmayer*, while a man named John, who claimed to have been a constant companion of Christ, professed to be its author. On behalf of all Christ's disciples, he, John, tried to present and to restore the truth about Christ's life and teachings.

The factual report soon impressed me for various reasons:

- First, because it defined faith as *ignorance* and *knowledge of truth* as a prerequisite for true charity. This was balm on my wounds after the disappointing experiences I had had with 'believers'.
- Secondly, because it explained the origins of the worlds with respect to evolution. Unanswered questions were discussed in a logical and reasonable way and not in the fantastic and contradictory manner of the Church.

- Third, because it explained why Christ had encountered so much hatred and was finally nailed to the cross. Christ had called the Jews' God evil and cruel and the Book of the Jews a construct of lies. As a consequence he increasingly incurred the wrath of the Jews-Supreme, who sought a way to get rid of him.
- Fourth, because the work reported on the Essenes from whom Christ was actually descended. And a few years later numerous scrolls were in fact found in Qumran on the Dead Sea near Jerusalem, which emphasized the importance of the Essenes, who so far had not received much attention. Academic circles began to puzzle over whether Christ had in reality not been a Jew but may have been descended from a Jewish Essene sect.
- Fifth, because the factual report confirmed that communication between this world and the hereafter was possible. In no way could the factual report have been written by the editor, a certain Mr Franz Woller from the seventh district of Vienna, nor by the writing medium *Griesmayer*, as both lacked an academic background.

After having been thrown out of the Association for the Unification of World Christianity I felt a somewhat edifying experience again. "What joy," I thought, "if the report was really true, if it was really possible to receive messages from former times!" I wanted, I had to find out!

First I tried to verify whether the contents of the report could really be the spiritual work of one or several beings from the hereafter. Therefore I decided to visit the editor of the book, *Franz Woller*, and soon I realized that the elderly man, a former policeman, could in no way be the author of the work. It was not necessary to be a linguistic expert to realize the enormous stylistic and grammatical differences between the comprehensive preface Woller himself had written und the rest of the book. A report of this kind could possibly have been written by a historian who had also carefully studied and read widely about evolution, physics, geography and other subjects.

Woller told me that back in the nineteen twenties a certain Mr. *Raimund Kubasek* had founded an association whose purpose was to explore parapsychological phenomena, and in particular to find out whether life after death existed. Based on this understanding he tried to gain information by making use of a medium, information that he finally obtained. *Dr. Josef Griesmayer*, the son of the medium, wrote to me in a letter dated 5 October 1993:

"Brother Raimund (all the members of the associations considered themselves as brothers and sisters) found a medium amidst his colleagues. His approaches, however, which were good at first, exploited erring beings and once again demanded faith. Brother Raimund did not pay attention to the others and reproached those who revealed themselves for their lies. So he broke up with the medium. Many of the group joined the medium, left the association and founded a new club. Only a few of his supporters stayed with Brother Raimund. So he searched for a new medium. My father had channeling abilities (he was able to feel field lines and energies emanating from the human body with his bare hands and without using any aids); so he offered himself as a medium to Brother Raimund. Developing mediumship for channeling both spoken and written messages was highly painstaking, and I, as a small child, experienced the entire process, as everything actually was going on in our small flat. The search for

truth and the all these critical questions attracted spirits that were able to answer the questions asked to them in a scientifically precise way. And finally it was suggested that a witness of the events which took place about 2000 years ago, namely John the Younger, should write down a report about Christ, his life and his teachings."

At the time when I started my research, Kubasek had already died so that I can judge his personality only from what I heard about him from people who knew him and from his writings. While I was writing this work I once again borrowed his books from the National Library and increasingly gained the impression that Raimund Kubasek must have been an earnest seeker of the truth and a frank and honest man. He founded the »Cosmological Club« of the third district of Vienna and made enormous efforts to bring »Light into the darkness of the secret sciences«. In numerous experiments he sought to find out the truth about communication with the hereafter and about life after death.

Kubasek published his work »Light into the Darkness of Secret Sciences« in 1922. Some time afterwards, however, he broke up with the beings of the other world, because he did not want to adopt doctrines of faith, and he demanded knowledge of the truth. So he aided Griesmayer's development as a medium and finally received channeled messages. Griesmayer, whom I visited together with Mr. Woller, confirmed Woller's story. At that time Griesmayer was already more than eighty years old and had not been able to serve as a medium for several years. Griesmayer was a very nice old man who told me about his experiences, for example how he, when still a tram driver, drove the tram through Vienna without being aware of it. During the nights he sat down, took a pencil and some paper and began to write. In the morning he nevertheless felt totally relaxed and was amazed about what he had written. Kubasek picked up the channeled messages and typed them.

Several years passed. I reflected, studied, discussed and compared the report with other books. There were moments when I thought I had recognised that the factual report contained the truth; then, however, I found another sore point and my search continued. Days of despair followed and many years later, when I was already living in Amaliendorf, the day came when I finally threw the factual report into the fire and burned it. I had had enough, I wanted to liberate myself, I considered the report to be proven wrong and deemed it necessary to get things straight.

I had been able to destroy the paper, but I could not erase my thoughts. Several years passed, then I asked my brother Richard to lend me the copy of the factual report that I had once given to him as a present. Having grown more mature in the meantime, I thought I was finally able to judge things more objectively. Once again I nearly accepted the factual report as true. A certain *Dr. Paulus*, who in the meantime had published the factual report as a book, called me. I once again met the son of the medium, Dr. Griesmayer, and also met another doctor who was a friend of Paulus. And sooner than I had presumed, I was liberated at last from the factual report that had haunted me for such a long time. Paulus and his devoted friend were not willing to discuss matters, and once more I saw certain practical effects emanating from the teachings contained in the factual report. In a group of people who had gathered to discuss the issue, I referred to the factual report again and appealed to those present not to take

anything, *not even the factual report itself*, for granted, but to go on exploring and always to remain open to everything:

"But what is the sense and value of accepting and spreading this book as a kind of new doctrine?" I urged. "Some statements in the report are uncertain, and nothing that was forecast for the future has actually happened!"

"You need not take this report too literally, dear Sauerschnig," explained Paulus without a trace of uncertainty. "It will take a long time until people understand the spirit of the factual report!"

"But in the report it is written that the spirit of the truth will rise again after 2000 years; that it will be recognized by some people and conveyed to mankind. Some peoples will accept the understanding they have gained, and later others will follow. Peace and truth will come to this world!"

"Dear Sauerschnig, I very much appreciate that you take the factual report so seriously, but you definitely must not take it too seriously. I have the intellectual capacity to see these things correctly. Everything will come true, but not yet in our time, maybe only in few hundred years. Have you read my book on this topic?"

I usually only needed to hear someone talking about intellectual capacity to react in an extremely negative way. Woller, too, considered himself a great man, and he said that his spiritual eye reached out to eternity. He viewed himself as a great spirit because he had had a spiritual experience with Christ. But as far as I had come to know him, he was hardly more than a man of average intelligence. The books and booklets he was eagerly writing were so repulsive that I could hardly bear to leaf through them.

The factual report did not say that it might be adopted only in some hundred years' time. Even Woller had already expressed his disappointment that despite all his efforts and the many books he had sent out to all kinds of people, nothing really happened. According to Woller, even Kubasek had obviously died in conflict with the beings of the other world.

At that time I already knew how easily Man can be mistaken and how time can alter human ideas. I supposed that there were numerous people who considered themselves Napoleon, and I also heard about dozens of people who passed themselves off as Jesus, Christ or Jesus Christ without realizing what banalities they normally uttered.

I have to admit that I too often have problems exactly remembering events or discussions which took place about 25 years ago, so that I can only give the gist of what was said without being able to repeat quotations *literally*. Every year erases memories, and I would not like to know what I might write after another 25 years despite my most earnest efforts to tell the truth.

"We must discuss whether the factual report was possibly written by beings who might not have been aware of their errors even though this may seem totally inconceivable to us," I tried to argue. "We have no knowledge about how events and incidents were recorded 2000 years ago. Did the beings from the other world take notes of Christ's speeches and file them? Why did Christ's

disciples not keep their records more carefully and bury them somewhere in order to maintain them for posterity if they knew only too well from Christ's discourses how easily evil is able to develop its sinister nature in human spirit? Or was what Christ might have said only reconstructed 2000 years later?"

Nobody was willing to pursue such outrageous thoughts. I realized that the situation was hopeless, said my farewells and went away. Once again I was alone; once again I was not mature enough for the others. Nobody had any intention of joining me in my research and discussing openly and frankly.

I was left with the idea that every belief is based on ignorance and that truth can only be found in realizing facts. What I learned from the factual report and my subsequent studies is that the God of the Jews is a cruel, hard, unjust, malicious, mean and merciless creature. And, as this is simply my nature, I also came to understand that the world can only be reorganized through love, understanding, equality and justice. But such lofty thoughts are not just expressed in the factual report.

I spent a great deal of time thinking about what I should write about a man as important as Jesus Christ. On the one hand he influenced the history of the world like hardly anybody else and primed the destiny of millions of people; on the other hand there is not a single line written by his hand. Did he not know how to read and write, or could he write but simply did not do so? Or did he write, but his scriptures were lost or destroyed?

No matter how you look at it: it does not really look good that we cannot find any scriptures written by Christ himself, he who is said to have been able to work miracles. If he was able to resurrect dead people, it should not have been such a major problem for him to set down his ideas and intentions on paper and to keep them safe for the generations to come. If the Essenes did succeed in saving hundreds of scrolls until the twentieth century, Christ and his disciples should have been capable of doing so too. Or do such scriptures actually exist and are withheld from the public?

Why is there not even a single line that was written by his numerous disciples? What did the apostles actually do? Did they only listen to their great master, or did they take notes in order not to forget? Confucius, Lao-tzu and Buddha soon had disciples who committed themselves to saving the thoughts of their masters for the future. And the towering figure of Christ, who could see into the past and the future, the alleged Son of God, is supposed to have been too stupid to save his teachings for future generations?

The only plausible explanation is that Christ and/or his disciples and contemporaries actually wrote down much in their letters, notes or books, but that these writings must have been partly lost and those remaining must have been destroyed intentionally and without mercy.

As there are no authentic writings, and as criticism of the written records and falsifications is still necessary, I consider it appropriate to contrast the written records of the Church with some statements in the factual report. Maybe a miracle will happen and it will one day be possible to reflect on and explore the life and work of Christ in a frank and objective way, free of any prejudices and without blood and thunder.

Using the factual report as a reference I hope to be able to demonstrate how it is possible that even when following the spirit of knowledge and understanding one may be mistaken and do harm without harboring any bad intentions. From the factual report it can easily be seen, if one is willing to see, how even spirits of the truth can be mistaken if they believe they have to link the truth to a certain person and capture it in a book.

The »Truth« about Christ

The factual report claimed *that Christ was not the son of Jewish parents*. Mary, Joseph and Christ's disciples were actually Essenes. These assumptions were strangely confirmed when between 1947 and 1956 numerous scrolls were found in Qumran on the Dead Sea about thirty kilometres from Jerusalem. According to a legend, a shepherd boy of a Bedouin tribe discovered a cave in a rocky precipice while searching for a goat. In this cave several earthen vessels containing ancient scrolls were stored. Later other caves were discovered, in which a total of several hundred scrolls were found.

I bought the first complete German translation by *Dr. Johann Maier* and read about the spirits of the light and about the rule of Belial (Satan), the origin of Man and all kinds of spirits and about the God of Knowledge etc. I could not really make sense of the translations. But nevertheless they seemed to confirm my assumptions that Kubasak or Griesmayer could not have invented the discourses in the factual report. Such ideas simply could not have existed in their heads!

In 1995 or 1996 I found a critical report written by *Michael Baigent* and *Richard Leigh*. Its title is »The Dead Sea Scroll Deception« and the subtitle is »The explosive contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls and how the Church conspired to suppress them«. This work describes how an »international group of experts« convened by the highest Church authorities applied all available means to defend its monopoly to study and assess these documents and to keep researchers silent who did not keep to a an 'agreement' which was made previously. The authors try to reveal why 75 percent of the approximately 800 documents written in ancient Hebrew or Aramaic are withheld from the public. Nevertheless, numerous copies of the scrolls, which were carefully kept under lock and key, were smuggled »outside« and carefully examined by university experts. On the cover of the book one can read the following, »*The authors reveal what was at stake for these orthodox guardians: The Scrolls present startling insights into early Christianity - insights that challenge the Church's version of the "facts."* More than just a dramatic exposé of the intrigues surrounding these priceless documents, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception* presents nothing less than a new, highly significant perspective on Christianity.«

The factual report said that after many millions of years of human existence, in which Man knew about the eternal and true meaning and purpose of earthly existence, peoples would come to this world which were less devoted to knowledge but rather relied on faith and worshipped several Gods. These peoples, however, were able to distinguish good from evil. Their cult consisted in them serving the good Gods by practicing charity and fearing the bad Gods and

protecting themselves from their wrath by offering them sacrifices. Their rather childish faith and relatively good character did not allow them to consider what was evil to be good and to pass lies off as truth.

It is also reported that there was one people that believed in only one God. This supposed God made use of mediumship to channel his messages to the leaders of this people. His message was that he was the one and only Creator of this world and of all life existing thereon. Therefore people should worship him alone, pray to him and serve him. The leaders of the people believed these messages - which were disseminated in a prophetic way - they worshipped this spiritual being as God and willingly accepted his offer to be the »Chosen People of God«. This being called himself God and - assisted by his mediators - he subsequently formed a cruel covenant with this people. He set up commandments which were accompanied by horrible threats and curses and which were meant to conceal in a most hypocritical way all the lies, the maliciousness and the thirst for blood. These commandments instructed his Chosen People to rob and murder and subjugate other peoples which they could choose themselves. He instructed his people to frequently sacrifice animals slaughtered in a most cruel manner and to destroy every person who dared not to recognize this being as God or to consider the influence exerted by this God and the deeds done on his behalf as wrong and evil.

According to the factual report, at the time of Christ's birth many smaller and larger groups of people lived scattered all around the world whose common aspiration was to enjoy knowledge, understanding about eternal life and the Eternal One whom they recognized as the spiritually greatest and most complete of all spiritual beings. These people were Essenes, considered themselves brothers and sisters and also called each other »brother« and »sister«. They practiced mediumship with spiritual beings from the other world and were well aware of the fact that the time was near in which the Eternal One himself would come to Earth as a human and would speak the truth to Man in his spirit.

In the lands of Judah and Galilee several Essene communities existed which, through mediumship, were in frequent contact with each other and thus formed a very close spiritual community. They were tolerated and accepted by all the other peoples. Only the Jews are said to have been hostile towards them and to have wanted to do them harm and threaten their lives.

In Nazareth there lived a brother named Joseph Aramaea. He was a carpenter and head of the local Essene community. At the time when Jesus Christ was born, he fled to Egypt together with Mary in order to escape persecution by the Jews who had learned about the advent of Christ's birth. On their way to Egypt Christ was born. He stayed in Egypt until he was seven years old, but later taught other peoples as well.

Probably Christ spent his later life in and around Jerusalem where his work was concentrated. He is said to have healed sick people, to have fiercely criticized the Jewish laws and to have described Yahweh as **Satan** (!). Whenever the space available in the town was too limited for the gatherings of the huge crowds he attracted, Pilate asked him to speak to the people in front of the town walls near Herod's gate. According to John he pulled the Jewish laws to pieces in front of thousands of people, among whom were many Jewish leaders and Rabbis. I would like to discuss some excerpts from Christ's speeches in order to

be able to understand why Christ encountered so much hatred from the Jewish elders.

I quote:

The book of this liar begins as follows:

In the beginning God created heaven and earth but the earth was formless and empty, darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Then God created the light, and only then he saw that the light was good. And he called the light day, and the darkness he called night. On the second day he separated the water above it. God called the expanse heaven. On the third day God gathered together the waters under the heaven, and he called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called sea. And he saw that it was good. And he said: »Let the earth bring forth grass yielding seed, and fruit trees yielding fruit after their kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth.« And God saw again that it was good. Only on the fourth day did God create the lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; among these lights God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And once again he saw that it was good. On the fifth day God created from the waters moving creatures that had life, and the fowl flying above the earth and then the big sea monsters. He blessed them and saw again that it was good. On the sixth day God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the tame cattle and the worms creeping on the earth, the wild animals, and he made man in his own image to let him have dominion over everything on the earth. This God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he put him into the Garden of Eden.

On the seventh day this troubled God rested from his great work. He blessed the day and most probably washed his hands, which during his final work, namely to create man, he had dirtied with mud and soil.

If only you consider how silly this liar's tale about Creation by Moses and his God really is. This poor God first creates the earth and the light of the day and the plants living on the earth, afterwards he creates the lights in the sky, among them sun and the moon. Even a small child cannot help laughing about these stupid lies and will certainly wonder what stuff God used to create the animals and how the earthen mud had to be if a mere breath into their nostrils was enough to make living human bodies from it.

According to this fantastic tale the plants, the worms and all the animals were created in two sexes. Only when creating man, this mendacious God had forgotten to create their sexes. So the poor man had to look for a female helper amongst the animals; but he found none. So this forgetful creator did not have any choice other than to create for the human man a female helper in his image as a substitute for the animal. And he caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man. This time this mendacious God did not want to dirty his hands with mud and soil again, nor did he want to take too much effort in breathing life into the woman's

nostrils. Therefore the slaves of this mendacious creator consider woman to be subservient to man and his equal...

Consider the document further and look at the pleasure garden that this supposed God planted. Apart from gold and precious gems the garden also had many trees which were nice to look at and whose fruits were delicious to eat. And amongst these trees there was the tree of life in the midst of the garden and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

So God, who had created the world from nothing, took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to tend it and to watch over it. And he commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Then the creator wondered how the man would call his helper and the beasts that God had created from nothing. They were both naked and were not ashamed, but the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the world which God had created from nothing, and it said unto the woman, "Why did God say that you must not eat from any tree in the garden?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall we touch it, lest we die." And the serpent said to the woman, "Eat of the fruits, you shall not die. Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." And so the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes. She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband, and he did eat also. And the eyes of them both were opened, and when they knew that they were naked, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Look at these fantastic tales! What does he that calls himself God but who is Satan intend with these lies? He describes the naked human body with its sexual organs as something we have to be ashamed of and which it is crime to look at!

I have explained to you where sex comes from, why and what it is for. You scribes, elders and rabbis know this, but nevertheless you hypocritically hide in the lies of your book. Yet each of you has five to ten concubines who are deprived of all their rights and whom you buy and sell like beasts.

Thereupon the scribes and elders and rabbis started to grumble and swear, and one of them shouted out to Christ, "We have our God and act according to his laws. But you slander God because you are poor."

Christ replied:

Yes, this liar wants to be your God and you want to be his servants. But you act according to his laws because you benefit from them here on Earth - at the expense of the poor and the beguiled.

So let us study this God and his laws more closely. In the first of his many laws he forbids Man to know good and evil. In order to be sure that they may not realize his lies and maliciousness, he threatens death upon them.

How mendacious this God is, is proven by the impudent lie that a serpent – an animal which by its very nature is not able to speak at all – had to come to tell

the man that there is an eternal life and that Man as a being capable of understanding is able to recognize good and evil. Even his invented serpent reveals his lies and proves that there is no death, but that there is truth.

According to the document, this God walked in the garden in the cool of the day and called them to account for their transgression of his commandment. He first spoke to the man, then to the woman and finally to the serpent, swore and imposed punishment on them. To the serpent, which by its very nature does not have legs and always had to crawl along the ground, he commanded that from now on it should crawl on its belly. And it should eat soil every day, which it still does not do even to this day. And he put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent should bruise her heel. And he greatly multiplied the woman's sorrow and her conception; in sorrow should she bring forth children; and her desire should be to her husband, and he should rule over her. And for the man's sake, whom henceforth he called Adam, because he had let himself be beguiled by the wife, he cursed the Earth and said to him: "Through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field until you return to the ground; since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Just think about how silly this lie is and how full of maliciousness and revenge. But this is not yet enough; God's punishments continue ... This Lord God sends Adam forth from the Garden of Eden, and he places at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword, to watch the way to the tree of life.

See what ignorance these lies create among the people and how you, you elders and rabbis, exploit their ignorance! You hypocrites and blind guides, who wander in the »darkness of lies« and block the way of those who search for the »light of truth« with guile, hypocrisy, violence, punishment and revenge, you are his greatest spiritual sputum; you knowingly act dishonestly and create evil for yourself for now and eternity!

Let's continue our studies of these lies and tales!

The woman, who Adam called Eve, is said to have borne two sons, Cain and Abel. No sooner did these four people live on Earth than murder and sacrifice started. God began to curse Cain because he had slain his brother. Cain hereafter went to another land and knew his wife; and she conceived and bore a son. How he could find a wife in this foreign land if there were only three humans on the Earth is not mentioned in the Bible.

The lies of your God become worse and worse. Now the whole genealogical register from Adam to Noah follows and it is described how one conceived the next one – even at the age of eight hundred years and more – and it describes how Methuselah even reached the age of nine hundred and sixty-nine years.

And suddenly this God *regretted* he had created Man on Earth and his heart was distressed. So he decided to destroy all life on Earth, Man as well as the worm creeping on the ground. Only Noah met God's mercy. He was commanded to build for him and his family an ark in his fashion, the length of which should be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. And he was commanded to take to him of every clean beast by sevens,

the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female, and to take with him food for himself and for all of them. When Noah had finished his ark and had entered it, this God closed him into this ark. And then he opened the doors of heaven and caused it to rain, and he caused all wells to flow and he drowned everything on Earth that had breath in it, except for Noah and his house full of animals.

What do you scribes, Jewish elders and rabbis say to this horror story?

Tell me how Noah should have been able to house on his relatively small ark one or seven pairs of each sort of animal on Earth and the necessary food for one hundred and fifty days?

Think about the impossibility of housing all sorts of animals on Earth in such a way and admit how stupid the tale about Noah is.

After this fantastic tale about Noah there is another genealogical register to make Man believe that all humans descend from Noah and that Adam and his wife Eve were the first humans. And names and peoples are mentioned, such as the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites who had already lived peacefully in this region twenty-thousand years ago, when no Hebrew yet existed on Earth.

I tell you: These peoples were Essenes and in reality they were very close to the truth about me and eternal life. Only your fathers attacked them, commanded by their God, and they murdered and robbed them. The nation of the Jebusites lived here in this land. The foundation walls of your biggest temple in this town, in which your liar and beguiler has his sanctuary, are the remains of the house of truth of the former people of the Jebusites.

At this the high priests and rabbis began to shout angrily, and some of them cried out to the people, "This Man calls our sanctuary, which our fathers built for our God, impure. This blasphemer should be stoned immediately!"

Christ continued to speak and he replied to them,

Yes, my words of truth hurt you. But I must make people understand the lies contained in your scripture so that they realize what evil spirit you follow. The words of your book prove that he who starts lying proceeds from one lie to the next. He then attempts to cover up one lie with the next one.

Listen which importance God attaches to your *foreskin* when he says

"Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

See what kind of spiritual being it is that devises and demands such acts! Tell me whether there could be any greater spiritual sputum than this God! But you execute his bloody commandments in reverential awe and thus sate his base lusts. As you call this spiritual sputum God, you admit that you want to be like this liar.

The covenants and the bargaining of this God continue. Thus he speaks to Abraham, "As for Sarai, your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her." Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety? And God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him." And for all the promises made, Abraham consequently carried out horrible mutilations on all male beings, and the abhorring lust of this God was sated by blood and pain.

It is also written that Abraham received a visit from three men who were God's angels and whom he gave water to wash their feet. He offered them bread and veal prepared with butter and milk. Then the three men asked him where his wife Sarah was. Sarah, who was in the tent at that time, heard that they talked about the birth of a son, and Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"

Listen how witty the discourse of the angels of this God with Abraham and Sarah was. These supposed angels just talked about pleasure and bearing children while washing their feet and eating cakes and roast veal with milk and butter.

Yes, as the rogue thinks, so he is and so he acts! (end of quotation)

According to the factual report Moses did actually live, and together with his God Yahweh, with whom he communicated via mediums (prophets), he wrote the books about Creation, Adam and Eve, Abraham etc. Unfortunately I found out rather late that the history of Judaism cannot have taken place in the way the Old Testament and so many religious people try to make us believe. In his work »The Old Testament and the Christian Church« Gerd Lüdemann, professor of the history and literature of early Christianity at the University of Gottingen, said:

"None of the Books of Moses is really by Moses, none of the Psalms of David by David, none of Solomon's sayings by Solomon, and none of Daniel's visions by Daniel, and hardly any of the prophets' words were actually pronounced by the prophets under whose names the books are known. There was no Exodus from Egypt, no Sinai Revelation and no handover of the Ten Commandments. Abraham, Isaac, Moses and Joshua are just names, and Jericho was never conquered. This cannot be stressed enough, as for more than 2000 years all this was part of a sacred past which helped Church officials and politicians to secure their power."

When comparing this to other sources from the internet it can easily be seen

that other historians are also well aware of the fact that the historical descriptions contained in the Old Testament are fabulous and implausible. The internet encyclopaedia Wikipedia, for example, contains the following information on the so-called Exodus from Egypt:

"A large-scale attempt to escape from Egypt as described in the Bible seems hardly possible, especially if the Pharaoh knew about it and had certainly tried to prevent it by military means. At least parts of the land of Canaan were occupied by Egypt, and several Egyptian fortifications with complete garrisons were located on the route leading there. As a result an escape from Egypt would have automatically ended in Egypt.

The route which the Israelites allegedly took to get to Canaan cannot be reconstructed accurately despite the descriptions contained in the Bible, and the exact locations of the Yam-Suf (Sea of Reeds) and of Mount Sinai are not clear either. This, too, is often considered by some scholars as proof that an »Exodus from Egypt« probably never took place.

According to biblical reports it was Moses who guided the Israelites out of Egypt. He, whose existence is also doubted by historians, is still considered the most important prophet in Judaism."

I have long been aware of the fact that it is possible to invent stories and then turn them into historical sources. Therefore it did not shock me to find out that even a person like Moses was only an invention. But I also had to understand that consequently the information on the Israelites' life in Egypt, their exodus, and the origin of the Ten Commandments etc., which in the factual report were put into Christ's mouth, could only be an invention or mere imagination too. And this still shocks me – that beings, both in this world and in the hereafter, are able to be misled and deceived in such a way that they end up inventing »truths« which are passed on with full conviction though they never took place in this way.

Of course we could say, "Why should we bother about the factual report?", but nevertheless all this cannot be simply shrugged off. Similar deceits and confusions exist in many areas, and people do not even notice it! I do not want to give any concrete examples because I do not want to offend anyone and because the spiritual confusions and deceits do not just concern religion, esotericism etc., but also the general ideas according to which people still live and govern today.

If Christianity does not scandalize you, you do not know it!

The factual report describes how Christ, due to his provocative statements, increasingly incurred the wrath of the Jews-Supreme. Therefore they searched for an appropriate occasion to get rid of him.

That the Jews-Supreme really wished to eliminate Christ cannot be doubted. Even the Bible itself repeatedly confirms this fact. According to *St. Mark's Gospel* (14,1) "... the chief priests and the teachers of law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him."

Pilate and Herod, to whom the life of a non-Roman most probably would not have caused much worry, are not able to see the point of the elders of the Jewish nation, and not even the instigated people intimidate them. They find Jesus not guilty and want to release him. The *Gospel according to Luke* (23,13) reports:

„Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to them, „You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. With one voice they cried out, Away with this man! Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting, Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Chapter 4 of the Acts (and many other passages analogously report the same) express too that not only Jesus but all his disciples were unwanted persons. After Christ's death, Peter and John were arrested because the apostles were teaching the people und proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead:

„The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day."

In the Gospels of *St. Matthew* as well as in those of *St. Mark* and *St. Luke* it can be read how Jesus spoke to the crowds, and how he warned them against the teachers of the law and Pharisees:

„Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and hypocritical say lengthy prayers." (Luke 20,45-47)

„Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness." (Luke 11,39)

„Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it." (Luke 11, 44)

And when one of the experts in the law felt offended after having heard all these reproaches, Jesus went on and added:

„And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs.” (Luke 11,46-48)

And finally Christ threatens that this generation will be punished for everything. He reproaches the experts in the law not to have used the gate to knowledge and to have hindered those who want to enter. „When Jesus left there, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say. Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: »Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.« And he encourages his friends not to be afraid of their suppressors, „I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more” (Luke 12)

There is no doubt that there were massive conflicts in opinion between Jesus and the Jews-Supreme, the elders, the scribes, the Pharisees and the lawyers. But the question must be raised why Jesus opposed the Jews-Supreme and their laws with such obvious stubbornness?

From the Gospels it can easily be seen that Jesus was a friend of the people and wanted to help them. He comforted them, healed the sick, gave them to eat, raised dead to life and warned of the Supremes as their seducers. Jesus most obviously wanted to win the people to join him and his ideas and thus risked getting into trouble with the leaders of the nation.

According to the factual report, the Essenes were not Jews. This, however, is hardly plausible. The numerous scrolls that were found in Qumran at the Dead Sea describe the Essenes as a kind of Jewish sect. In his work »The House of the Messiah« *Ahmed Osman* says about the Qumran scrolls and the Essenes that the scrolls belonged to a library of the *Essenes, a secret Jewish sect that had separated from the Jewish community and the priests in Jerusalem whose faith and teachings they rejected as wrong.*

It is even less plausible that Essenes lived among all peoples. The claim of the factual report that Christ was in India to visit the Essenes community there, could not be proved by a single document.

According to up-to-date research results it seems likely that Jesus originated from the Jewish sect of the Essenes. During his life he developed an ever-growing dislike against the Jewish leaders. More and more he considered himself a liberator and redeemer of the Jewish nation. Most probably he had a highly convincing appearance, a vivid mind and extraordinary rhetoric skills. Moreover it is likely that he had certain healing powers and thus was able to heal through his words (his will).

The factual report says that in his spirit Christ was the greatest of all beings, and it was he who enabled all other creatures to live. I decline on principle any discourses on the »greatness of spirit«. But nevertheless I would like to point out that I consider it most unlikely that Christ should have created the basis for the life of all living beings. Life evolved gradually, and human life – including Christ's – evolved much later.

There have always been critical voices that have pointed to the crumbling foundations of the Church. At universities it is taught how much was falsified and how many battles and disputes preceded the so-called »truths of faith« before they could be passed off nicely as expressions of God's will. Even the crowds of ordinary people feel that something must be wrong. They feel that Christ was a man dressed in simple clothes, who definitely would have rejected the purple caps and luxurious garments and who preferred the poor dwellings of a simple man to the noble houses of the rich. Everyone feels that dirty thoughts and mean deeds cannot be made undone by forgiving sins and that confession is a way to find out the people's most secret thoughts. Many people know what actually happened under the sign of the cross, how fantastic the biblical story about Creation is and how much guilt the Church has loaded onto it. And nevertheless crowds flock to the places where His Holiness, the Pope, appears!

The Church is not dead and religious criticism has certainly not come to an end, as Karl Marx believed. Marx is dead, but the Church is still alive and is celebrating its revitalization in formerly Communist domains.

What is going on in all the people, who on the one hand think logically and realistically and are able to achieve incredible things, but on the other hand flock to places in their hundreds of thousands where the highest bishop on Earth appears? What is going on in these people that makes them act in such an inconsistent way?

It is an old but successful trick: the Church establishes a figurehead, preaches justice and truth, charity and fraternity, about equality and humaneness, and its representatives make pious and compassionate faces and warningly lift their finger. Then they raise their hand that it may be kissed, the pouch is handed round, and afterwards they return to their daily business, namely multiplying the number of believing souls, increasing the power of the Church, collecting as much money as possible, taming the stubborn ones, managing estates and trying to increase them in number, elaborating guidelines and commandments and finally eliminating those who oppose the Church.

What does *Joachim Kahl* write in his work »Das Elend des Christentums« (»The Misery of Christianity«)? "The necessity to go on criticizing Christianity and theology is due to the simple fact that they continue to exist. The light of reason once more has to be directed against today's representatives of religion who have always benefited from the universal human trend to forget."

Joachim Kahl, born in 1941 in Cologne, studied theology and graduated from Philipps University Marburg with a PhD in theology at a time when he had already started to settle up with the Church. "This book is a pamphlet", he writes in the preface. "It cannot and does not want to conceal its polemic intentions. It was written due to a constant constraint of purification. I do not share the generally

prevailing prejudice that rational criticism can only be presented in an undercooled and reserved manner. I have not written this work without anger and without study, but with anger and with study, with the ire developing of its own accord after a sufficient amount of thorough studies. If Christianity does not scandalize you, you do not know it!"

I am interested above all in the human who is sacrificed on the altar of a God whom I detest from the deepest bottom of my heart. *Franz Overbeck*, the renowned theology professor in Basel, admitted at the end of his professional career, „I may say that Christianity has cost me my life." But who really has enough courage and energy to throw everything overboard and start all over again after having completed his theological studies?"

Gustav Wyneken, the important German pedagogue (1875–1964), who studied theology for some semesters and then gave it up, devoted himself for a long time to studying on a scientific basis biblical traditions and interpretations of the Christian Church. In his work »Abschied vom Christentum« (»Farewell from Christianity«) he struggles for honesty and truthfulness and fights hypocrisy and the thoughtless followers. „An acute text analysis, while applying all methods available in scientific-critical philosophy and historical research, permit only one conclusion," the book says. „The New Testament is not a Holy Scripture, no historiography, but it is literature, tendentious and propaganda literature. Christian theologians know this, but still keep preaching Christian faith. The believing laymen hardly know anything about the loss of credibility of their faith, nor are they able to explain why they believe. In religious matters most Christians nowadays throw overboard their critical sensibility and acute skepticism, which they usually show as »world people«: In faith, however, they persist in an attitude which in their every-day lives is totally obsolete and contradictory."

Kahl's judgment, which is the result of his most understandable anger, is even tougher, „The New Testament is a manifesto of inhumanity, a wide-ranging mass betrayal; it makes people dumb instead of enlightening them about their real interests."

„Like its younger brother, joint heir and competitor, Islam, Christianity is based on Judaism," says Wyneken. „These three religions did not develop (gradually), but they were founded. They had a historical beginning that can be dated. The other big religions of antiquity such as the Babylonian, the Egyptian or the Greek, were natural religions. Their main Gods were personifications of natural powers, natural phenomena and natural laws that fill the universe and will eternally stay the same.

Christianity is totally different. It does not have any »Book of Natural Secrets«, it is not interested in nature which it totally ignores. It does not pursue the great human target to work out how the world really is. It selfishly breaks away from solidarity with human fate and human efforts. »Cosmos«, the word that the Greeks use for describing the wonderfully ordered universe, is used as a kind of swearword in the Christian religion: it stands for the evil world, from which we should escape. And religion is the way we should go in order to escape, the way which was opened to the humans because Jesus, the Son of God, has become human."

„The word »Bible« should actually be removed, if not from our linguistic usage then at least from our thoughts,” explains Wyneken. „In reality this comprehensive, famous, ancient book is not a homogenous work, but a colorful collection of literary monuments from more than a thousand years. These works are totally inconsistent among themselves and not just accumulated by bookbinders but due to the will of two religious communities that collected and compiled these scriptures and decided to consider them as the documents of their faith.

Linguistically speaking the term »The Bible« is a malformation, or at least it is based on a misunderstanding. The German word is derived – via Latin – from the Greek »biblia« (plural!) and means »books«. Only from the medieval ages, when Greek was no longer studied in the Occident, »biblia« became to be understood as a singular: »the Bible«, and it was increasingly forgot that this book is not an organic unit, but a conglomerate consisting of many different and diverse components.”

The Church structured its »New Testament« according to the model of the »Old Testament«, which comprises the books of Moses and other scriptures of prophets and kings. The New Testament comprises the four Gospels, the Acts and instructive scriptures by the apostles. As Jesus is described as the son of Yahweh, the Old Testament has become a binding and divine revelation for the Christians, too.

But there exists no single line written by Christ himself, and the Gospels according to Mark, Matthew, Luke and John were not really written by the apostles of the Lord. »Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament« (»Herder's Theological Commentary on the New Testament«), a work, of which it cannot be said that it was written by an author hostile to the Church, reports about the time and the authors of the Gospels and the Acts:

„The Gospel according to Luke was written around 70 A.D. For the Acts it seems appropriate to assume the decade between 80 and 90 A.D. as time in which they were written.”

„Like all »Gospels« - as the scriptures based on St. Mark's Gospel will be referred to later – the Gospel according to St. Mark was undoubtedly published *anonymously*.” The assumed time in which it was written is most probably around 70 A.D.

„The Gospel according to St. Matthew was written *anonymously* around 80 A.D.”

»Of course« the various scriptures are full of contradictions which I do not want to discuss in detail. Only one example: Christ was borne by the Virgin Mary in only two of the Gospels, but not according to the other two.

In his work »Kriminalgeschichte des Christentums« (»Criminal Story of Christianity«) *Karlheinz Deschner* says about the numerous falsifications of the Church, „Many, maybe even most people are afraid to suspect such terrible betrayal particularly in the most »holy« sphere of their lives; but in no other field were there more lies and betrayals and more unscrupulous ones than in religion.”

According to Wynekens, who very much tried to find the truth, the scriptures were written in the following periods: The Gospel according to *Mark* at around 70, the Gospel according to *Matthew* at around 90, the Gospel according to *Luke* at around 100 and the Gospel according to *John* at around 140. The Acts, most probably by Luke too (although no-one really knows who Luke actually was, as the Gospels were edited anonymously), were written after 100. The First and Second Epistles of St. Peter as well as Jude's Epistle are falsifications, as many other epistles are supposed to be; the integrity and completeness of some of the scriptures seem to be more than dubious; furthermore it is suspected that parentheses and supplements were added at later stages in time. Merely the *Pauline Epistles* seem to be authentic.

But who was Paul?

Paul was a Jewish-Supreme, and his actual name was *Saul*. He hated Christ from the bottom of his heart, and together with other Jewish-Supremes he persecuted him and his followers. The Acts report how fanatically Saul schemed against the Christians even after Christ's death (Acts 8,1-3): „On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. *But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.*”

Chapter 9,1-22 of the Acts reports about Saul's desire to kill the disciples of the Lord. „*Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who.*” But Jesus, who would have had enough opportunities during his lifetime to convert Saul into Paul, appeared to him on his way, and he asked why he persecuted him? As a consequence Paul was without sight, did not eat or drink for three days, and he prayed. So the Lord had to appear again. This time he appeared to Ananias, who was a disciple of the Lord in Damascus. He reported about the praying Saul, *whereto Ananias replied that he well knew Saul and his evil spirit*. But the Lord did not give in and said that he wanted to make this tireless persecutor of his spirit his *chosen instrument* (!). When Ananias finally did what he was commanded to, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized.

So what was the purpose of this evidently feint? What was it for?

It is not difficult to see that here most evidently a wide-ranging betrayal was launched. The Jews-Supremes were obviously searching for new, promising means to do harm to the Christian movement. Cunningly they decided to make the Christian movement feel insecure and to break it up by spreading fantastic tales and lies. Paul, a fanatic, was the best man for this purpose. Endowed with a new identity (Paul), money, secret support from the Jewish-Supremes and a nicely invented story about the appearance of the Lord, he came up with more fantastic news about Christ. Of course people did not believe him immediately. In Acts 9, 1-22 is written, „*When Saul came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.*”

In this way, the recorded disputes in the ancient Church can easily be understood. Soon many people no longer knew what Christ really had said, and they tended more and more to believe the version disseminated by the pious and hypocritical Paul, who - due to the money he had at his disposal - was able to emphasize the meaning of his words with bread and wine which he turned into *flesh and blood of the Lord* during his ceremonies.

One of the early Fathers of the Church, *Clement Alexandrinus* (born at around 150), also pointed out the confusing state the Christian groups were in. He complained that Jews and heathens rejected joining the Christian movement, „because due to confusing dogmatic disputes raging among the various Christian groups people did not know who really stood for the truth.“ *Origen*, another Early Christian Father (who died at around 254) admitted that „many of those who confess to believe in Christ are unable to agree, not only about small and trivial things but also about *important and significant matters*.“

They could not even agree on the position of Christ. The so-called triune interpretation with a Father, a Son and the dove as Holy Spirit was developed after horrible disputes in a Church Assembly which today is nobly referred to as a »Council«. The Roman Emperor Constantine finally became fed up with all the religious disputes and fights. So he convened the rivaling and fighting groups to a church assembly and commanded them to agree on one homogeneous opinion on God and Christ. In this assembly, that was an in-door battle resembling a national-socialist meeting rather than a civilized discussion, the Creed was worded. Since then innumerable „I believe in God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, his only son...“ were sent up to Yahweh.

But what else could be expected? When speaking about the Creed it has to be pointed out that there are numerous different versions. So one must not believe that the bishops during their synods were inspired by the Holy Spirit to find the right words. To study the various versions is a highly time-consuming effort that does not really lead to any satisfying results. Those interested can refer to the »Compendium of Creeds and Doctrines« and study the »Coptic Creed«, the »Ethiopian Creed in Questions«, the »Apostle's Creed«, the »Eastern Formulae« and many others.

The religious controversy did not at all come to an end after the Nicene Council. Synod followed synod.

When the Germanic migration of the peoples began, and the Roman Empire was increasingly under threat, the Christian movements achieved a decisive victory. They managed to move Emperor *Theodosius*, a man of a most violent temper, to declare the Christian Church the official religion of the Empire and to forbid heathen practices.

In the course of the centuries the power of the Church increased steadily. Soon even the emperor and the kings had to ask for the pope's favor, because it was the pope alone who was able to grant God's mercy and award the insignia of world power. Monk Hildebrand, after having become Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085), strove to set up a world empire under papal guidance. An open fight between Gregory VII and King Henry IV broke out after Gregory VII had proposed his program of spiritual predominance in the *Dictatus Papae* of 1075 (a series of 27 propositions exalting papal authority). Henry IV did not surrender to

Gregory's demands and called for battle against his Church-friendly opponent, a battle which he lost. The fights continued and caused Gregory VII to excommunicate the king. He thus liberated all the King's subjects from the oath of allegiance and forbade the King to rule his empire. Henry IV had to travel to Italy and appear in front of the Pope dressed in a penitential robe. So the Pope had to lift the ban from the repentant king. In 1080 Gregory VII excommunicated Henry IV a second time. The angry King reacted to his excommunication by applying all available military means. His strategy was so successful that Gregory VII had to seek refuge with his Norman allies.

In the Middle Ages mental stupefaction was steadily growing towards a simply intolerable state. Any criticism was nipped in the bud. Inquisition, one of the most cruel incidents the world ever experienced, evolved. The Protestant Church historian *Walter Nigg* writes about it: „If someone claims that it was not that bad, it must be answered: Oh yes, it was bad, so bad that it could not have been worse!“

At first the bishops and their synods were responsible for the inquisition. They entrusted some laymen in every parish to track down »heretics«. When the Church could not be »purified« in this way, Pope Gregory IX finally changed inquisition into a centrally controlled institution of the Curia and assigned (1232) the Dominicans with its tasks (»domini canes« - »dogs of the Lord«, as the name was interpreted in the vernacular).

The inquisitors usually announced their visits to the towns to which they went. So the people could prepare themselves and gather at the given time. Those who did not appear were automatically considered suspects. Every Catholic was obliged to denounce »misbelieving« Christians, parents had to betray their children, children their parents, and spouses each other. Anyone who did not do so was guilty too. And the inquisitors had a particular liking for anonymous, written denunciations.

Trials against heretics usually began with imprisonment. The accused person was considered guilty right from the beginning. He was sent to prison, put in chains and forbidden to receive the sacraments. Right at the very beginning the accused person had to swear to the inquisitor, who was prosecutor, judge and confessor in one person, to respect all the commandments of the Church, to answer all questions in full compliance with the truth, to reveal all joint heretics and to willingly accept all kind of penance. *No defense counsel was admitted in the trial.* If the accused person did not make a full confession, torture was applied.

Obstinate or recidivous »heretics« were burnt alive. The inquisitors did not even shy away from exhuming bodies and burning the remains if it was »proved« afterwards that the deceased had been a heretic.

The burning of heretics usually took place on Sundays or holidays in order to attract the biggest number of spectators possible. Special riders were sent out to nearby places to invite the people to watch the spectacles. High prices were paid for windows with a view of the stake. While the National Socialists gassed their victims before burning them, the inquisitors feasted their ears on the moaning and crying of those tortured.

Sexuality was demonized and women were defamed. What every animal perceives as natural was debased to something demonic in human life. Every thought of physical pleasure had to be suppressed and fought down. Perverse acts were the consequences. The woman who already in Yahweh's time was seen as not equal to man was considered inferior, and women increasingly faced the arbitrariness of men. Kahl says, „The New Testament is the outcome of neurotic and narrow-minded people. Human sexuality is not seen as a source of pleasure, but as a source of fear, not as a medium of love, but as a medium of sin. Everything natural and bodily is banned – in part openly, in part hidden.“

In what a miserable state the Church was can easily be seen from the many anathemas which popes, bishops and their followings exchanged. In 1054 the Latin and the Greek Church finally broke apart. The two parties cursed and excommunicated each other. For many years there existed two Popes simultaneously, one residing in Rome and one in Avignon, France. Both of Christ's Substitutes on Earth anathematized each other and the regions subject to them, and they precipitated crowds of ignorant people into a terrible fear for their eternal grace. The Synod of Pisa in 1409, whose aim was to end the schism, removed both Popes and elected a new one. As the former two did not even think of retiring, the children of God were suddenly blessed with three Popes. The office of some Popes only lasted a few days or hours, and once it even happened that a Pope was killed by his successor, and his body was dragged through the streets of Rome in order to set a warning example.

Irrevocable theorems, the so-called *dogmas*, forced the believers to respect believingly, this means uncritically, every commandment of the Vatican. While every scientifically-minded person is well aware of the fact that every assumption remains a theory as long as it has not been sufficiently verified, the Popes and bishops believed that pretensions once made could be upheld for eternity. Although it must have been clear for a long time how much the popes and their followers had erred, *infallibility* was adopted on 18th July 1870 in the 4th Session of the 1st Vatican Council. Although even many Council Fathers expressed their reservations and finally left the Council before the decisive session, *Pope Pius IX* managed to adopt the dogma of infallibility.

Those who are able to bear studying the dogmas of the Church will constantly come across open threats. Those who cannot agree are cursed and anathematized. „Si quis autem huic Nostrae definitioni contradicere, quod Deus avertat, praesumpserit: anathema sit. *But he who dares – God forbid! - to contradict this Our definition* (of the infallibility of the Popes), *shall be anathematized*“. What the anathema, the ban of the Church, the expulsion from the community of believers, accompanied by horrifying curses and threats, meant to the people of those times is nowadays hard to imagine for us, who are relatively free people.

It is no use enumerating all the wrong decisions that followed the adoption of infallibility. It is clear to everyone that is not wholly in the thrall of the Church that there is no connection whatsoever between the Holy Spirit and the Curia. Furthermore the adoption of infallibility *concerned only the interests of the Church and never those of its believers*. After Hitler had come to power, he concluded his first international treaty with the Holy See. No Holy Spirit hung over the Pope's head to suggest that any treaty with that man who was just about to become one of the biggest criminals of history should not be concluded.

When somebody is tormented by pressure of conscience because the »truths« of the Church cannot be conciliated with his reasonable mind, the priests tell him: „You must not doubt, my dear child!“

Yes, we are treated like children. We are baptized and integrated into the Church long before we have any idea about where we are taken. Right from the moment when we are born it has tried to obscure our mind with horrifying tales and to fight our reasonable thinking by applying lies and pretended truths.

All major or great findings or movements were fought down. *Giordano Bruno* died at the stake on 2 February 1600. In 1633 *Galileo Galilei*, down on his knees and dressed in a penitential robe, was forced to abjure his teachings and to perjure, „I have in front of me the Holy Gospels, touch them with my hands and swear that I believe and with the help of God will always believe all that the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church considers, preaches and teaches as true... Therefore I abjure honestly and without any hypocrisy, I damn and curse all these errors and heresies, and furthermore I abjure any other kind of error, heresy or sectarianism which is against the Holy Church. I swear that in the future I will neither in writing nor in speaking disseminate anything that might cast suspicion on me. But if I know a heretic or someone who is suspected of being a heretic, I will denounce him in this Holy Office or inform the inquisitor or the local Church authority.“

„All parties concerned knew only too well that this oath was a lie,“ writes *Johannes Hemleben* in his monograph on Galileo Galilei. „But the state of moral corruption, in which the »Holy Office« was at the beginning of the 17th century, contributed to overcoming all sensations of conscience both in the accusers and the accused alike. People had long become used to such untruthfulness. As long as people allow any impulses of power to affect the finding of justice and jurisdiction, there will be trials that should be unbearable to human conscience. Therefore the point cannot be a mere »rehabilitation of Galileo«, as the Viennese Cardinal König demanded in summer 1968. A shameful verdict that was executed cannot be annulled centuries later.

The »Case of Galileo« was and is not primarily concerned with the question of which position the Earth has in the universe, but with the right the Church claims to decide between truth and untruth, with its decision being binding for all believers. Under the pretext of being the guardians of truth, crimes were committed on behalf of Christianity and under the official guidance of the Church, crimes that have contributed to eliminating people whose orthodoxy was doubted.“

Instead of teaching the believers how to write and read and to inform them about their objective interests, the Church preferred to keep them dumb to make it easier to collect their money. The Lord priests were well respected, and even though they did not own them, they still administered estates of various sizes. Even up to the 20th century some lamb that felt guilty in some way would donate his property to the Church to buy salvation for life in the hereafter. Enormous sums of money were made by selling all kinds of things – pictures and relics; and the sale of indulgences proliferated so terribly that it finally had to be prohibited.

While the ideas the so-called heathens – for example the Romans – had about God were based on tolerance, and the Roman Empire developed a relatively just legal system, Yahweh does not know any mercy with dissenters. He spreads a feeling for justice that may cause one to weep. His commandments demand belief in him, and him alone; he is the great and vying God who appears as fire, tolerates nothing and nobody besides himself, and eliminates everyone that dares not to believe in him and serve him. Yahweh is a slaveholder, who gives Moses exact instructions about how to manage this servitude, and how he even may sell his own daughter as a maidservant. Hypocritically he instructs, »Thou shall not kill!« (Fifth Commandment), but in the same moment this God demands the murder of all prophets who pronounce other beliefs and killing every thief regardless of why he has stolen. Children must die if they swear against their father or mother even if they do so because they are beaten or tortured. Entire peoples must be eliminated because of God's wrath. „If you (Moses) listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies turn their backs and run.“ (Exodus 23, 20ff)

It is really interesting to see which commandments Yahweh did *not* promulgate. Those who **lie** remain unpunished as those who are **hypocrite**. He does not dislike the filthy types, but those who dare to doubt Yahweh, this strange Lord, must be eliminated at once.

If men fight – God really thinks of everything! – and while fighting hurt a pregnant woman and she loses her unborn child, then the culprit has to pay a fine. But if any other harm is done, then a life must be given for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, a brand for a brand and a weal for a weal.

How stupid his instructions and commandments are can easily be seen in Exodus 21,28-29: „If a bull gores a man or a woman to death, *the bull must be stoned to death*. If, however, the bull has had the habit of goring and the owner has been warned but has not kept it penned up and it kills a man or woman, the bull must be stoned and the owner also must be put to death.“ The idea that the ox might have pushed because it was tormented does not even enter this God's mind.

Although Yahweh **has commanded not to kill only a few moments before**, he continuously sets up rules about killing Man and beasts. „Do not allow a sorceress to live. Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death. Whoever sacrifices to any god other than the LORD must be destroyed“ (Exodus 22,17-20)

And see which promises this God makes and does not keep, only to make people loyally serve and worship him and only him: „Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you, and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span. I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies turn their backs and run.“ (Exodus 23,25-27) Either Yahweh is that naïve as to believe himself that he can

prevent disease and miscarriage and will make the people fulfill the number of their days, or he just says these things so that his wishes and commandments are observed.

Yahweh is like a raven that wants to have everything that glitters. He instructs Moses to levy offerings. "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. Have them make a chest of acacia wood—two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. Overlay it with pure gold, both inside and out, and make a gold molding around it. Cast four gold rings for it and fasten them to its four feet, with two rings on one side and two rings on the other. Make an atonement cover of pure gold—two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide. And make two cherubim out of hammered gold at the ends of the cover." (Exodus 25,2-18)

God's instructions continue like this. The cherubs shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and candlesticks of pure gold must be made and the tabernacle of this Lord must be decorated. There must be an altar and many nice instruments for sacrificing as often and conveniently as possible. His servants, the priests must look lovely. So this almighty God instructs garments to be made with a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle, that are similar to the garments which are still worn by the priests today during their service to this God.

Sacrificing to God mainly consisted in slaughtering animals, which had to be done in a strictly dictated manner. In front of the altar the best animals were slaughtered in the face of God. The priest had **to take the blood (!) with his finger and put it upon the horns of the altar (!) and pour all the blood (!) beside the bottom of the altar**. And all the fat had to be burned upon the altar. But the other parts had to be burned with fire without the camp. How it must have stunk most disgustingly after these acts of sacrifice and after the numerous raids directed by this God! In a raid against the Midianites – which can be read in the Old Testament – twelve thousand well-armed Hebrews slew all males. And they took all the women captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire. And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoils unto Moses. And Moses was wroth with the captains and robbers and murderers. He said unto them, „Have ye saved all the women alive? *Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that had known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.* Whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever had touched any slain, purify yourselves with water."

Just imagine: hordes of robbers kill *all males* and devastate everything that can be devastated. But Moses, the great prophet of God, is angry and demands

that the boys and all the women who have already had intercourse be killed too. Only virgins are welcome, first because they are nice to look at and convenient to abuse, and secondly because they can serve in multiplying the nation. How these women felt and what happened to their children is not written in the most holy of the books.

After the slaying of the children and the strangling of the women it was God's turn again. He did not order an end to the murdering and that the scared and abused maidens be left alone; no, he demanded *his share* of the prey. He instructed Moses to separate from each sort whether man or cattle one out of five hundred souls. This made, as documented in the books, 675 sheep and goats, 72 oxen, 61 donkeys and 32 virgins (!). Moses had to bring all of them – even the virgins! – to the priest Eleazar to sacrifice them before the altar of this Lord who rejoiced over the blood of those murdered.

Who can consider such deeds as good? Which man, even one of a very bad character, cannot find such morbid actions disgusting and perverse? How perverted, how obsessed, how errant must people be who have read or even studied these things and in the face of a deceived crowd still speak pious prayers in front of the altars of this monster?

The Old Testament is full of lies and brutalities of all kinds. The cock and bull stories start with the tale about Creation and continue until Moses, who was a strange leader of his nation. All the time there is tussling and quarrelling, killing and murdering, fornicating and sacrificing, and sacrificing again, swearing and breaking oaths, cursing and damning, deceiving and lying.

Yahweh is no God, Yahweh is a demon, immeasurably vain and obsessed with the thought of being served and glorified by all living creatures. He who is unable himself to do anything but brag and boast, makes use of Man to achieve His goals.

Yahweh uses his »angels«, whom he also calls »prophets«, to talk to Man. Stories such as the one about the burning bush are fairy tales. In reality the angels and prophets were media, and only through these media could Yahweh negotiate with Moses and other leaders and dictate his commandments and orders to them.

That mediumship to communicate with the hereafter was known at that time can be seen from Leviticus 20,27: „A man or woman who is a medium or spiritist among you must be put to death. You are to stone them; their blood will be on their own heads.“

So when someone was a medium but not in Yahweh's service, he had to be eliminated immediately to make sure that the true demon-like nature of Yahweh would not be revealed by these media. In Numbers 12 there is a description of how even Moses' media – Miriam and Aaron – tried to oppose and said, „Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?“ they asked. „Hasn't he also spoken through us?“ Consequently this God became very angry, and he made Miriam become leprous, white as snow. And Aaron was very much frightened and did not say anything. But a little later this God called him into his kingdom and made Aaron's son Eleazar a prophet.

The book of Deuteronomy (18,10-15) also reports about wizards and prophets, „Let no one be found among you who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who *consults the dead*. **Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD**, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. **You must be blameless before the LORD your God**. The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so. The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.”

Is it not more than clear why this God has such panic fear of people who have clairvoyant or medial abilities?

Why is Yahweh considered a God, but Hitler on the other hand a mass murderer? Have both not ordered the same thing? – Hitler did not like ethnic groups such as Jews or gypsies, Yahweh disliked entire nations!

For a long time the Church knew only too well how to keep believers away from the foundations of their faith and how to satisfy them with what they considered good and pleasant. The holy mass was read in Latin; what was preached from the pulpit was merely in the interest of the Church. *Martin Luther* finally translated the Bible into German and thus managed to make it known to the small minority who knew reading and writing.

The Church has always benefited from the fact that alternatives – such as cults and sects etc. – actually offer well-known things and usually the same God. It has managed to maintain its position, because »blasphemy« - like I practice it here - is still punishable. But the Church has also benefited from the fact that scholars again and again have become fed up and done away the topic God with three simple words »does not exist«.

But the end of the rule of Yahweh and his servants is only a matter of time. »Modern« humans are reasonable and capable of learning; they will manage to get rid of the burden of the past and will do so with pleasure as soon as an appropriate occasion arises. One day, which might not be too distant, churches will disintegrate because they lack financial contributions, and many of them will have to be preserved with public funds in order not to erase totally the memory of terrible times.

Mediumship

For the keyword »*Spiritism*« comprehensive literature about communication with the hereafter is available. Spiritism is understood as research of the hereafter. Its main objective is to prove that life after death exists. The knowledge gained in Spiritism forms the basis for *Spiritualism*, which takes up results of Spiritism and turns them into worldviews.

While the belief in the existence and manifestation of ghosts is a very ancient one and existed in all religions, cultures and eras, Spiritism only developed in the

19th century. The 1st April 1848 is considered as the »date of birth« of Spiritism (Source: »Handbook of Religious Communities«). Two little girls, *Leah* (10) and *Kate* (12) heard knocking sounds in the house of their father *John Fox*, a Methodist farmer at Hydesvill near Rochester (USA). In a playful way the girls established contact with the »knocking ghost«. A fact-finding committee consisting of the »most learned inhabitants« of Rochester, among them *Fenimore Cooper*, the author of the famous novel »Leatherstocking«, was not able to explain the knocking sounds in a natural way. After *Isaak Port* had invented a knocking alphabet, it was possible to talk to the ghost. He said that he had been a salesman who had lived in Fox's house. He had been murdered and buried in the cellar. People dug in the cellar and found a skeleton.

This incident was widely discussed and triggered numerous other phenomena. Houses were haunted, tables turned, direct voices heard and automatically written down. *Andrew Jackson Davis* (1826–1910), who had medial gifts, wrote the book »The Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse«, which describes ways and means of spiritual communication with the hereafter. In 1855 the number of Spiritists in America was estimated at about 2 million. By 1848 the movement had already gripped France and subsequently Germany and England. Highly esteemed personalities joined the movement, and even atheists were convinced.

In the following decades Spiritism spread throughout the world. Among its supporters there were not only ordinary people but also highly renowned scholars such as *Hans Driesch*, philosopher and former student of Hckel; *Gustav Theodor Fechner*, philosopher; *Friedrich Zllner*, astrophysicist; *Charles Richet*, physiologist and Nobel Prize winner; *Alf Russel Wallace*, who along with Darwin was a founder of the theory of natural selection; *Marie and Pierre Curie*, physicists and Nobel Prize winners; *William James*, leading American psychologist; *Oliver Lodge* and *William Crookes*, highly esteemed English physicists. Even today numerous academics are among the supporters of Spiritism.

The Spiritist movement led to the foundation of innumerable circles, research societies, communities and associations, indeed even numerous churches.

Spiritism as research of the hereafter describes the spiritual world as a subtle body world. According to the understanding of the Spiritists the subtle body world surrounds and penetrates the material world. Its radiating substance is characterized by different frequencies that determine the quality of the subtle body world. The spiritual world is supposed to be composed of a number of levels or dimensions of existence. The lower the radiation frequency of such a level is, the nearer it is – not in a spatial, but in a qualitative sense – to the dense body world.

According to the »Handbook of Religious Communities« experience has shown that in sances (sessions) preferentially »spiritual beings from a low level« speak to the members of the sessions and fob them off with banalities and fibs. The work also describes that Spiritists are very much interested in establishing contacts with »spiritual beings« from higher or the highest spheres, because their information concerns all levels and dimensions of the universe, reveals the internal laws which govern it, describes the individual spheres and answers the question about what God is like and why and for what purpose he created the world. The higher the rank of the spiritual being is, the more importance is

attached to the information it provides. Therefore the so-called »father media« are particularly important – media through whom angels or other members of the heavenly hierarchies, or »Christ«, or even »God the Father« himself express themselves. Their »revelations«, however, are usually full of commonplaces and pious but meaningless phrases. That is why critical Spiritists are highly sceptical about revelations emanating from this particular source.

The Spiritist view of the world is - according to the »Handbook of Religious Communities« - characterized by the following basic principles:

a) The »dense material« world, i.e. the material world itself, is only a relatively small section of total reality. It is embedded into the »subtle material« world which is as real as the material world but cannot be perceived by physical sense organs and thus evades scientific research. The »subtle material« was called »Od«. According to its discoverer *Karl Freiherr von Reichenbach* (1788–1869) it is a concealed force that is comparable to magnetism. Nowadays Spiritists make use of the terminology and knowledge of nuclear physics and describe subtle bodies as substances consisting of radiation. The whole universe is made of these substances. The »dense material« is only condensed radiation, and in its smallest atomic constituents a continuous interchange between the corpuscle and the state of radiation takes place. The subtle body world – which is also referred to as the astral or etheric world – surrounds and penetrates the material world.

b) Man consists of three parts: the physical body, the astral body and the spirit. The astral body is a true counterpart to the physical body. It has limbs, sentiments and sense organs just like the physical body. But as it consists of subtle body substances, it is, unlike the physical body, not subject to the fate of sickening, aging and dying. It forms the actual housing for the spirit, which consists of indestructible substance. This means that it is endowed with eternal life.

c) Life on Earth is one stage on the spirit's way to completion. It is a kind of school, and the spirit incarnates in order to learn, to pass exams and thus mature for its further ascent. The incarnated spirit has to tackle the task to liberate itself from all bonds tying it to the material world and thus obstructing its advancement. Such ties are for example selfishness, instinctive sensuality, envy, pride, jealousy, bossiness, but also hypocritical piety and fanatic belief in dogmas. The most important task it has to fulfil is charity. Charity is the »only true religion«. For selfless love is the basic law underlying the universe. The true value of religions and denominations is therefore not measured by its doctrines, but by the love they extend and practice.

d) Death is neither the ending nor is it destruction, but it is a transition from the earthly stage to another stage of existence, i.e. a change of scene. Vested in the astral body the spiritual being enters the world of the hereafter. To guarantee that this transition takes place without crises, it is of utmost importance that the being has already believed in a life after death when still living an earthly life. For if a person dies in the frenzy that everything is over after death, this person will inevitably be confused after his physical death, because he does not believe that he has actually died as he is still alive; so he tries to continue his earthly activities and habits and realizes that something is wrong, and therefore goes astray restlessly and helplessly.

e) Similar to Earth the astral world has a landscape with mountains, valleys, lakes, animals, trees, flowers, cities etc. The lowest spheres of this world are described in most horrifying pictures. But good spirits care for the tortured ones, as soon as they are called. They help the poor ones to gain insight and lead them, if they repent, to purer worlds. Already slightly higher spheres are filled with peace and beauty and offer much more pleasure than the earthly world. The deceased comes into his appropriate environment, and his wishes and visions about home, garden, lifestyle etc. are immediately translated into reality. Furthermore he finds a vivid mental, cultural and social life.

f) The ways and tasks of the spiritual being in the hereafter are a direct continuation of his ways in earthly life. He is transplanted to the level of existence that would correspond to his stage of development on Earth. There are physical reasons for this phenomenon: The spiritual progress or regress during one's life on Earth has direct impacts on the astral body, and assigns the astral body a higher or lower frequency. After physical death the spirit is sent into the sphere that has the same frequency. This is a kind of automatic judgment, the spiritualistic counterpart to the biblical Last Judgment. The entire way of the spirits is influenced by a kind of pedagogical evolutionism which has the following characteristics:

- The spiritual being is free in all its decisions and is able to determine its fate.
- It is – in the sense of creation - determined to undergo spiritualization, which it accomplishes through steadily growing knowledge and moral refinement.
- A standstill or regression on one's way to self-perfection automatically leads to a falling back to a lower level of existence. Re-ascending is only possible if the yearning for spiritualization reawakens. Every higher sphere surpasses the lower ones in beauty of scenery, richness and opportunities for further development and broadening one's horizons, and is also superior to lower spheres due to the spiritual-ethical qualities of its inhabitants.
- Each ascent to a higher sphere is accompanied by knowledge, pureness, pleasure and happiness. The way upwards opens up to all spiritual beings innumerable opportunities of self-realization and self-development presented by the unlimited abundance and magnificence of the divine universe. Self-development, however, is the spirit's own work, but pedagogical evolutionism makes sure that finally all spiritual beings will reach this goal.

The books written by the former priest *Johannes Greber* (1876–1944) were particularly important for Christian Spiritualism. I, too, was recommended his book »Communication with the Spirit World of God - Its Laws and Purpose«, and I was fascinated when reading how the priest became familiar with mediumship, and what extraordinary processes take place around mediumship. The ideas of Spiritism were further disseminated through the books of the Frenchman *L.H.D. Rivail*, alias *Allen Kardec* (1804–1869). I subscribed to »Botschaften aus dem Jenseits« (»Messages from the Hereafter«), published by the *Geistige Loge Zürich*, and I consulted the books »Das persönliche Überleben des Todes« (»The Personal Survival Of Death«) by *Emil Mattiesen* and »Diesseits und jenseits der Scheidewand« (»On Both Sides of the Partition Wall«) by *Friedrich Härdle*. I attended a Viennese Circle which practiced mediumship. As I asked too many

direct questions, I soon lost my chance to verify whether really deceased people were speaking to the people present in the sessions. But when looking back I really doubt whether I would ever have got this chance. The head of the group considered the processes as too natural as to feel any necessity to have these processes verified scientifically. He, who was firmly convinced about everything that was going on, wanted to convey to the members of the group the understanding that life after death actually existed. He certainly had good intentions and tried to help in his own way.

In Vienna *Raimund Kubasek* founded the »Cosmological Club«. He experimented eagerly and tried to bring some light into the darkness of the secret sciences. He was a remarkably critical man and published a series of treatises that impressed through their noble intentions, truthfulness and charity. In the final conclusion of his work »Lichtstrahl in das Dunkel der Geheimwissenschaften« (»Light into the Darkness of Secret Sciences«) he said that the most noble work of Man is to be an earnest advisor and to serve as an example in truthfulness to one's neighbours. I think that he actually felt and thought like this.

In my opinion there are good reasons why Spiritism has repeatedly been doubted and questioned. For making tables turn or producing strange knocking sounds and light effects in dark, candle-lit rooms no spirits from other worlds are necessary. Some trivial tricks are sufficient to stun people who – looking for distraction – hope to see some signs of supposed ghosts. It is no use discussing such things seriously.

Spiritists who consider communication with the spirit world not only as mere amusement but really as a way to better understand life, of course reject vehemently these trivial activities and any kind of obfuscation and secretiveness. These Spiritists try to work out honestly and earnestly the truth about the meaning of our life and survival after death.

But can Spiritists who eagerly strive for truth not err? Is it not possible that even the most honest searcher of truth may be trapped in a pitfall of mental deceptions?

Looking back unto the many years in which I studied Spiritism and similar movements, I have to admit that I was repeatedly subject to deceptions, although I have always tried to find truth and nothing else but truth. Concealed deep inside of us there are dormant wishes and hopes, and our expectations draw us in one direction while disappointments drag us in another one. Only slowly and gradually does our personality grow and mature, our desires and hopes disappear, and our eyes are sharpened so that we can see clearer.

After having published the first edition of my work I made further considerations and compared the messages received from the hereafter again. My better understanding of the human nature and my experience helped me realise above all that currently our world is obscured so much by the spirit of faith that knowledge in the sense of truth cannot penetrate to us. Spiritual communication with the hereafter has always existed. Even Yahweh refers to fortune-telling spirits that had to be killed immediately because they did not confirm the desert god's religious lies but warned the humans of this mischievous being. For peoples that believed in good and bad gods it was common to consult

the gods, so people have always turned to individuals with medial gifts to ask them for advice before taking important decisions.

The problem, however, is that only very few people are really interested in truth and searchers of truth are often faced with nearly insurmountable problems. Those who want to find out more about it, should read works by Johannes Greber and Raimund Kubasek, two people who were truthful and made hard efforts to realise truth. The priest Johannes Greber established contact to beings that knew that many assertions of the Roman Catholic Church were wrong. These beings tried to explain what seemed wrong to them. Raimund Kubasek was obviously the first searcher of truth who realised that true knowledge can only be found through cognition rather than in faith.

I once read a statement in a psychic report that made me think a lot. I do not remember the title of the work nor the exact wording, but the passage in question claimed that even in the hereafter there are worlds whose inhabitants do not believe in God. Obviously Raimund Kubasek was able to establish contact to beings that had realised faith to be bad and that considered Christ to be the true God. Through automatic writing he was able to write a report about the life of Christ, which he published under the title »Lebenserkenntnis II« (»Life Cognition II«). This report, though slightly changed, was later published by Franz Woller under the title »Tatsachenbericht aus der Ewigen Welt für alle Völker der Erde« (»Factual Report from an Eternal World for all Peoples of the Earth«).

The publisher of Raimund Kubasek's work »Life Cognition II« describes the enormous efforts that Raimund Kubasek had taken on his way to life cognition. I would like to quote an excerpt from the preface because it shows how difficult it is to penetrate to truth. Even if we manage to reach truthful beings this does not necessarily mean that they are actually free of error. **In the same way as we can believe whatever we want, we can also »realise« whatever we want. Both humans and beings in the hereafter can err, can propose any kind of theories and can still be convinced that they have realised »truth«.** This may happen if beings are not entirely truthful, accept excuses and turn a blind eye to certain things.

As a result we might think that everywhere there is nothing but confusion, both here in this world and »over there« in the hereafter. We think so because we live in an earthly reality and do not have deep insight into things. But this Earth and the spheres near to our Earth only represent a small part of the entire Creation. If we were somewhere else, we would be more than surprised about the ideologies that are propagated on our Earth.

Our error is that we expect a central entity to exist where truth is stored in a huge archive where it can be retrieved whenever necessary. But there is no such archive where information from world systems and galaxies is stored and which is supervised and administered by God, and in fact we can easily do without it when it really comes to recognising truth. As a result there is no retrievable information about Christ's life either. If people such as Raimund Kubasek start asking questions about it, beings from other worlds try to answer these questions as precisely as possible. Such people consult different beings that they expect to know; these beings in turn may ask other beings etc., and it is obvious what the outcome of this type of communication is.

In fact 2000 years have passed since the time at which Christ lived. Many of the facts were faked, distorted or obscured. An enormous number of people have adopted this spiritual cocktail, have taken it with them to the other world and disseminated it. Therefore it is comprehensible that both on the Earth and in the hereafter nobody seems to know any longer what actually happened. When asking questions about it, the questioned beings try to communicate »the truth« to the humans, but even though they try hard to be truthful, the result is just another belief, even if this belief is now worded in the spirit of cognition.

And this is the excerpt from the preface of Kubasek's work:

"From about the year 1910, Mr. Raimund Kubasek also dealt with occult powers. As a guest he started to attend numerous Spiritist meetings, though at the beginning he was highly sceptical and did not know much about Spiritism. Later he used various mediums to verify numerous experiments, and he finally became convinced of the existence of unknown powers. He eventually became certain that spiritual beings from the hereafter are able to express themselves through mediums. By means of mediumship the researcher tried to penetrate deep into the mental-spiritual field of knowledge. The beings from other worlds that communicated themselves hardly ever gave any clear or logical answers to his questions. But as he was used to reject empty phrases, theories, assumptions and suppositions, as well as dogmas and the mere belief in a mysterious highest being, he was not satisfied with the few useful answers he obtained. Determined to explore the erring and ignorance of the beings in the hereafter, he continued his in-depth research in this field. In his striving the scholar soon met fanatic resistance and often even malice because the circle participants did not want to accept any criticism on the spirit that had manifested itself. What practically all circles had in common was that their participants obviously had no interest in profound questions but were gathering above all out of curiosity and sensationalism. Furthermore it was striking that beings from the hereafter that manifested themselves always said and just gave the answers that the circle leader and the session participants expected. The researcher soon realised that it was above all the circle leader who was decisive for the medium's spiritual attitude and that due to the participants' similar thoughts and feelings only beings from the hereafter that had an equal state of mind and similar character traits were able to respond accordingly. Moreover he found that many beings that had already lived in the hereafter for decades or even centuries had the same ignorance in the spiritual-mental field, the same faith and also the same immoral character traits as they had had as humans.

To be able to continue his research independently and without meeting resistance, Raimund Kubasek trained one of his office colleagues, who was highly interested in these endeavours and furthermore possessed outstanding medial abilities, in automatic listening, writing and speaking. Over the years other mediums, too, offered their services for various experiments, and as a result the researcher was able to penetrate deep into the field of knowledge in question. He realised the power of suggestion, hypnosis and telepathy, the huge responsibility of the experimenter and eventually also the dangers of Spiritist communication for laymen and people who are easy to influence. Furthermore he found that it was above all the medium's leader and guide who was responsible for the medium's proper spiritual adjustment. He must by all means meet certain spiritual and character requirements and possess the necessary experience in

this field to guarantee that the communicated spirit can be judged objectively and without being influenced.

Mr. Kubasek tried hard to make his colleague, who had proven to be the most reliable of all the mediums who he had worked with so far, spiritually adapt in such a way that eventually beings from the hereafter that possessed a higher way of thinking and good character traits were able to communicate themselves. With their clear and logical answers these beings were able to fill many of the gaps in the researcher's knowledge. Now his aim was to use a suitable medium to establish contact with the former Disciples of Christ and thus obtain a factual report about the great events that took place at that time. He did not want to keep this report and his research results only to himself or make it available only to a small circle of people, but he wanted to offer it to everyone without exception and thus make everybody benefit from it.

During this time the researcher gave several public lectures, published a book titled »Lichtstrahl in das Dunkel der Geheimwissenschaften« (»Light into the Darkness of Secret Sciences«), wrote various relevant articles for newspapers, discussed with several renowned psychiatrists and important church representatives and started to work on several topics for his philosophical scientific work »Lebenserkenntnis Band I« (»Life Cognition Volume I«). In the year 1923 he founded an association which was intended as an educational institution for free cognition that was exclusively based on the knowledge on Creation, God and the nature of life. Everyone who was interested in cognitive knowledge could join this association. In regular lectures followed by discussions and by means of practical examples Mr. Kubasek tried to introduce his audience to the mental-spiritual field of knowledge.

Over the years the number of members increased steadily. Even some fanatic supporters of faith joined the association. They had come above all out of curiosity and soon rejected the basic principle established by the association's founder, namely »Free and truthful in thinking and helpful to your neighbour«. This small group of people managed to influence the researcher's colleague and medium and manipulate him spiritually in such a way that eventually only spiritual beings of a corresponding way of thought were able to respond to him. First in hiding, and then more and more obviously also the beings in the hereafter started to take a stand against the researcher. He bore fierce threats, malice and libel with calmness and patience and still kept trying to re-establish harmony in order not to lose his medium. But all of the scholar's efforts failed. The medium's right spiritual attitude was no longer guaranteed, and as a result it was no longer possible to continue positive cooperation.

But Mr. Kubasek was not discouraged by the troubles, disappointments and hostilities. He did not lose heart and went on searching, researching and teaching and continued his work on the first volume of »Life Cognition«.

One day, in the year 1931, a member of the association and personal friend of his called on Mr. Kubasek and asked him to check his medial abilities. He said that he was available as a medium for further research activities. And in fact he proved to possess medial abilities. The researcher, however, took some time of consideration because the training and the correct spiritual adaptation of a medium requires a lot of time and effort. Furthermore the basic mental attitude of the medium is important and it is absolutely necessary for all parties involved

to meet certain requirements. Only after careful consideration and another comprehensive discussion with his friend, a calm and modest person, and his friend's wife, the researcher decided to provide the training.

To be able to fully dedicate himself to his new task, Mr. Kubasek took an early retirement. For the training and the spiritual adaptation of the medium he required a bit more than a year. Then the researcher had reached his aim. Through his new medium he managed to establish a direct spiritual contact to Christ's former Disciples. They were able to communicate themselves freely and without restrictions, as the will of the medium had been totally switched out and his mental and physical vital substances had been adjusted accordingly and met the necessary conditions.

The training had taken place without making any fuss about it, and without making any fuss about it the factual report was written within three years by means of mediumship. The researcher worked mainly with the Disciple John the Younger. He spoke with him about every detail and all the events that took place at the time in question; again and again he asked him questions to get a clear impression of what had actually happened at the times of Christ. As far as possible the scholar, through his medium, tried to talk personally to the people concerned. Together with John he then choosed the events that he considered appropriate for his work. Usually late at night, when the medium was undisturbed, he fell into trance, and using a foreign body John wrote down facts about selected events that had previously been reported orally. On the next day these written reports were handed over to Mr. Kubasek, who then worked on them and used them as a basis for his factual report. While working on this report the medium strictly followed the researcher's instructions. He showed neither interest in nor curiosity about what was said or written."

The existing information suggests that a close connection with the hereafter can exist and actually has existed, though such a connection can probably just exist with »worlds of spheres« that are close to the earthly world. I, as an open-minded researcher who has been working in the spiritual field for many years, however, have never managed to obtain any useful information by means of a medium. After having read my article on the Internet one medium wrote to me that he was able to establish contact to Jesus or even to God. When I asked him a simple scientific question, however, he did not contact me again.

I have got the impression that in the foreseeable future it will not be possible to establish contact to worlds in which spirits live according to the spirit of truth and charity, in which harmony prevails rather than lies, and where hypocrisy and malice are unknown. In the course of hundreds or even thousands of years humans on Earth have created so many misleading and malicious powers through their thoughts and have thus distanced the Earth so much from worlds or world systems which are characterised by a peaceful and harmonious attitude that it will take a long time for truthful and loving thoughts to reach a breakthrough.

Actually the factual report has often brought me to the brink of despair. On the one hand it communicates noble thoughts and ideas that in this way may be 3true one hundred per cent. On the other hand it can easily be seen how certain texts were obviously changed after the reports had proven wrong. I understand that there must have been difficulties in communication and I also understand

that humans tend to include their own interpretation. But at a certain point this understanding reaches its limits, namely when it becomes clear that those who claim to teach truth do not always take truth seriously or do not fully understand the concept of truth (truthfulness) either. If this happens, it must not be tolerated by any means. **Any noble and attractive doctrine must prove as true in daily life.** For example if beings in the hereafter claim that they are always eager to help when it comes to recognising truth, they should also live up to this promise. So if they say that they can testify this or that it is not enough to just write it down by means of a medium (unfortunately everyone can write whatever he or she wants), but they also have to use comprehensible methods. If for example the Disciples of Christ knew that Christ's doctrines would be distorted, they would have had to write them down and keep them safely at some place where they could have been found even two thousand years later. So if now, two thousand years later, some scripts are found in some cave or at any other place, which correspond to the information obtained by means of medial communication, this is evidence that is scientifically significant.

Probably reality is simpler than we think, but in the vast amount of information we often fail to see the basic facts. We live in one of the many, many worlds that exist in this universe, in a world full of contrasts, in a world in which terrible laws of nature exist. Why we are here cannot be determined even though we keep searching on and on. In this our world we can learn a lot if we want to, and we can learn to tell the true and good from the untrue and bad. But life takes only a comparatively short time. Then we get into another world of this universe or maybe even into another universe which we call the hereafter. Maybe we will live in the world to which we get after our death only for a certain period of time, too, but it is useless or maybe even harmful to get lost in such speculations. So let us try to learn in this world rather than escape to worlds of our imagination; let us try to grow mentally and spiritually and to develop sympathy and love for other living beings. For would we really benefit from information from a supposed hereafter if this information, even though it may sound wonderful, eventually just leads to distraction and erring rather than to finding truth?

Malcolm S. Southwood reports

There is comprehensive literature providing direct or indirect »evidence« that we are spirit and able to live on after death. I have heard about spiritual healers and seen a film which showed how people were operated on with bare hands, how blood flowed and people were healed from their diseases. On television I saw a report about a shaman who had his tongue cut off in front of the camera. And afterwards he had enough spiritual power to join the piece that had been cut off to his tongue again and make the two pieces grow together in such a way that no scars were to be seen. I found a book by the English physician Laurence J. Bendit and his clairvoyant wife and nurse Phoebe D. Bendit. They reported about spiritual processes from birth to death.

I could still observe powers in myself which had to be of a spiritual nature. I only lost them gradually when my job increasingly consumed me. What really made me think a lot were certain instructive dreams. Totally involved in seeking

the truth as I was, I was often faced with many unanswered questions, and I felt restlessness deep inside of me. Sometimes it happened to me that I dreamed the answer to my questions, and I awoke at a specific time, usually to the minute! What was even more amazing was that sometimes I was woken up at the right time, but by some other noise, such as a crying child. One day – I was about 35 years old – I dreamed again, but this time with the message that from now on I would no longer dream (such enlightening dreams). From that day I have been totally on my own and had to go my own way without receiving any visible assistance.

Years later I found a book by the professional English healer and therapist *Malcom S. Southwood*, whom an inner voice had guided for a long time until one evening it said to him that the time for him had come to assume responsibility. This voice told him that from now on he would be on his own and that he had to learn to understand what he did and how he could use his own spiritual power and love.

In his work »The Healing Experience« Southwood reports about how he became a professional healer:

I am a professional healing therapist who for over ten years has been helping people from all over the world. What follows in these pages has been learnt through the experience of treating several thousand people and keeping an open mind. It has always been my aim to cut through the dogma and the clouds of superstitious nonsense which surround much of the healing world.

I am what is termed a »spiritual healer«. This is an awful term, for it can be interpreted in so many different and often incorrect ways. I can only write about my own experiences and beliefs and I make no claims for other healers. Healing is an individual art and like artists, healers have their own unique style. No two artists paint alike, neither should they criticise those whose strokes of the brush are different from their own. Rather they should consider whether they could usefully learn something from another's technique.

So how did I get started? How does a businessman become involved in such things? At the time I was managing my own international agricultural marketing company. I also had contracts with one of the big American oil companies to manage some of their agricultural business. This work took me all over the world.

On one particular day, on my way back from London, I was held up in a line of rush hour traffic and happened to see a notice in a window which read »Spiritualist Church«. At the time I thought no more about it, but as the week wore on the words »Spiritualist Church« began to haunt me. I kept asking questions about it, pestering anyone who might know what the term Spiritualist meant. I suppose I must have become quite a bore because my wife finally suggested that I go to one of their services. As she put it, "No one here is going to get any peace until you go and find out what it's all about for yourself!" So the next weekend I attended one of their services.

I must admit that at first I thought they were all mad, especially when the minister taking the service pointed to me and said, "You are going to be a healer for God, you are sitting in a big white aura. The work you have to do is just

beginning." Believe me, I couldn't get out of the hall fast enough. Me, a healer? Absolutely absurd. I had a wife and four children to care for, a company to run. I must have been mad even to go near the place! However, for some reason that I couldn't explain, I just couldn't stay away and each time I went I was given the same message until eventually people began to ask me to heal their headaches, knee pains and other small ailments. What was even more astonishing was the fact that I *could* and people began to come to me for help.

After a while that same voice inside which had insisted on my visiting the Spiritualist Church in the first place now told me not to visit any more. The church had served its purpose in getting me started, it said, and from now I was on my own. It might seem strange to talk about having a voice somewhere inside oneself, giving instructions, but this wasn't the first time I had had this experience. Even as a child I had heard this voice guiding, instructing and directing me and I had never had reason to think that this was anything but normal. As far as I was concerned, everyone had this protective and guiding voice. In fact there had been times in my life when it had actually spoken for me and I had listened to my own voice speaking the thoughts of another. It had got me out of more than one tricky situation. When I couldn't think of an answer I had just let this »voice inside« speak for me.

Shortly after that, in 1979, I became very ill and spent time in the local general hospital. I remember very little about this period except that I left my body. The memory is now very vague, but I do remember going somewhere for instruction. It was like a cramming school. I suppose the medical profession would say I was hallucinating, but I wasn't. In all it lasted no more than about five days. During this time I was in an isolation ward, had two lumbar punctures and lots of tests. In the end no one ever did positively diagnose why I had suddenly collapsed in agonising pain and then drifted into some sort of semi-consciousness, but one thing was certain. The man who had gone into hospital was not the man who came out. It must have been a full twelve months before I was fully fit again and during that time I began to lose interest in my business. My whole appreciation of life and death, and all my emotional value, had changed. So had something else: my healing gift. It was now really beginning to take off and the variety of complaints which I was being asked to treat continued to increase.

Eventually I closed what was left of my agricultural business and I began to concentrate entirely on healing. I suppose I reacted in a similar way to most people when they suddenly realise they have something of value to offer. I wanted the whole world to know. My enthusiasm ran riot. The first thing I would do, I thought, would be to place adverts in the press to attract attention. At this point that little voice inside got in the way "Don't advertise," it said. What rubbish, I thought. What's the point of having a gift and not using it to the full? So for the first time I ignored my guiding voice and began to work on an advertising plan.

The day after the voice had said, "No advertising", and I had quietly, but firmly said, "Get lost", I received a second warning not to advertise. I was expecting someone to arrive during the morning for an appointment. At the appointed time there was a knock on the door but it was not the person I was expecting. Instead there stood a vicar. I didn't know him and I must have looked surprised because he began by apologising for being there and in a somewhat

embarrassed way explained that he didn't know why he had come. He had been driving along the road to an appointment when quite suddenly he had an irresistible urge to turn into our gateway and drive down our private lane to the house.

"I don't know what I'm doing here," he said rather lamely, 'can I come in?"

He entered the room which I use for healing. I explained that unfortunately he wouldn't be able to stay for long as someone was expected. But he wasn't listening.

"What a magnificent view," he said, looking through the bay window and across the pool immediately below it. "What do you do?"

So I explained about my healing gift and gave him some of my inspirational prose to read. After he had been with me about half an hour, neither of us talking, he quietly said, "This is a beautiful place and you are not alone in it. I don't know why but I'm being forced to tell you, and I don't understand it, but under no circumstances must you advertise your gift."

With that he got up and left and I never saw him again. Neither did I ever see the people who had booked the appointments the vicar had taken. I don't know what happened to them. This put me in a spot. I had let my company go and with it my income, and now I couldn't advertise to attract business. But all was not lost. It wouldn't be advertising if the local doctor, with whom I was very friendly, would send me those patients that the NHS couldn't help. I went and saw him and told him what I was doing. He said he had heard and also that I had helped some of his patients already. He would suggest to those of his patients who might be interested that they also see me. I didn't see that as advertising but apparently the voice inside did. I wasn't able to help a single one of the ten or twelve clients who came to me from the doctor. In fact I found that my healing gift had completely gone. I wasn't able to help anyone. So I had blown it. A chance in a lifetime to have a wonderful gift and I had thrown it away just because I thought I knew best. There was nothing for it now but to start my agricultural business up again.

About six months later, when I had given up all thoughts of healing, a lady called and asked if I would help her. She had a lot of pain from arthritis. I explained that I didn't practise healing any more, but she looked so disappointed and begged me to try just once, so how could I refuse? She came in, I put my hands over her, and »Wow« it was back. I could feel the power surging through again and I heard a little voice inside say, "Next time do as you are told."

That voice guided me for a long time. Then one memorable evening, when I was giving a talk about spiritual matters to some friends, I heard my little voice say, "It's time you began to take responsibility for these matters yourself. From now on you are on your own, learn what it is you are doing and use your own spiritual strength and love. It's been fun, but now you take over." At this I began to realise that there is more to healing than just putting your hands over somebody and letting another be responsible.

Then Southwood explains: "There is nothing special about healers. They have not been specially chosen by God, or anybody else, because of some supernatural trait or belief. Unlike a lot of senior medical practitioners who would have us believe that they are on a plane above the common man, healers are generally ordinary people with a genuine desire to help others. Healing is a gift, though it is not granted because of a particular philosophy or to a particular individual for services rendered. It is an innate ability which many possess, though some have more ability than others. Like painting (which most of us can do to some extent), some are better at healing than others, some are better at particular aspects of healing and we all improve dramatically the more we practise.

Some healers choose to work in groups, others singly. Some prefer to close their eyes and meditate as they heal, while others play background music. There are those who work within organised groups, such as religious organisations, while others work entirely alone. There are also a number of specialist healing groups. Some believe that you can only heal if you have completed a training course and undergone some form of initiation service or ceremony in front of your peers to prove yourself worthy of their acceptance and thereby support. Others believe you need to have acquired belief, understanding and instruction in a particular religion or moral philosophy so that you are acceptable to God in a manner similar to themselves. At the end of the day it doesn't matter a jot what you believe, or where you go for healing instruction. An individual either does possess that extra factor which makes him a healer or he doesn't.

So what does a healer do? Basically very little that you can see or judge. He stands behind or in front of the client, on his own or with a colleague, and passes spiritual or physical energy from or through himself to the one offering himself for treatment. As these energies flow into the client so normal health is partially or wholly restored. I say partially because healing often takes more than one treatment.

So just what do I do when someone comes to me for healing? We are three entities, the body, the mind and the spirit. The decision I take concerning the client depends upon whether it's a physical problem, an emotional one or a spiritual one. Basically very little can go wrong with the physical. The body is a perfectly designed piece of equipment. It is totally self-regulating and self-maintaining, and only requires fuel, in the form of energy, which we get from the food we eat. Apart from genetic defects, accidents, poisoning and disease, nothing can go wrong with our machine. Some would claim that even these four exceptions we bring upon ourselves through our attitudes and personalities. But there is a fifth area of concern, trauma.

I believe that most disorders are emotionally created. Healing therefore generally means helping the spirits come to terms with some situation which is troubling it so that it can work in harmony with its body, then the physical begins to break down.

By the time a client arrives at my door he has usually tried all the orthodox methods and reached a point where he has been told to learn to live with his problem. If any client coming for treatment has not previously seen a doctor or obviously has a medical problem then I will, of course, refuse to offer treatment unless the client first agrees to take orthodox medical advice."

Malcolm S. Southwood describes his methods of healing and his contribution to healing. He finally concludes as follows:

"As long as healers persist in believing that because healing is a gift no further effort is necessary to improve or influence that gift, they will remain as amateurs outside the mainstream of health care. It is true that healing is a gift, but it is arrant nonsense for healers to suggest that they don't need to provide proof of minimum standards of excellence before declaring themselves proficient in the art of caring for the welfare of others.

Healers also need training and education to fully develop, use and understand their gifts. Basic instruction in counselling, psychotherapy, physiology, biology, religions, metaphysics and any other subject directly or indirectly involved with their work is a necessity if healers are going to forward their cause.

When healers begin to take themselves seriously, so will the medical profession. Healing therapy is desperately needed to cure the causes of many of the nation's health problems because drug therapy is not the whole answer. I believe that the medical profession has lost its way in a jungle of medical technology. It has been reduced to treating symptoms which the subconscious will go on producing irrespective of medical treatment until someone goes beyond the symptoms and identifies the cause. This is true healing."

The Bridge of Consciousness

In around 1971 I bought the treatise »The Etheric Body of Man: The Bridge of Consciousness« (the German translation »Die Brücke des Bewusstseins« was published by Adyar Verlag Graz). This work dealt with the vital etheric field of Man. The English nurse Phoebe Bendit-Payne, who had clairvoyant capabilities, and her husband, the physician Laurence J. Bendit, wrote this treatise, in which the processes of the human »vital etheric aura« are described in all states of human life. The book analyses the etheric field of humans in pregnancy, childhood, in adults, as well as in health, disease and death.

The treatise fascinated me because it was not based on religious beliefs but on scientific methods and studies. Furthermore it described the energy fields which I had felt and perceived since having fasted for three days. All energy fields together are called *aura*, which was described first by *W.J. Kilner*, a Council physician and a former staff member of the St. Thomas Hospital in London. He made these fields visible to people with normal perception by using certain chemical filters.

In the preface of her book Phoebe Bendit-Payne explains what she understands by clairvoyance: "In the physical world one can learn much by observation, but it does not at all follow that what is observed is understood. In using the faculty of clairvoyance one still uses external observation, and sees much that is not necessarily deciphered accurately. All such vision is personal, and not to be confused with spiritual illumination. The evidence of the physical senses can never be accepted as proof of ultimate reality. All extra-sensory perception has to pass through the mind of the percipient and is therefore biased

by its mental images, intellectual interests, and the neutral tone and coloring of that mind."

The authors describe an aura which surrounds every living being and which is hidden from ordinary vision, and which varies in states of health or disease. „The skin only represents a physical limit to the dense body. Outside it there is a region of emanations which though subtle and beyond the range of normal vision, or even of the most sensitive photographic film, is nevertheless intimately connected with the body and its functions while alive. After death it is no longer there. It may be argued at this point that one is dealing with so mundane a thing as the heat radiated from the living body, so that when the coldness of death sets in it has vanished; and indeed it may be that some part of the aura is associated with heat. But that would leave unanswered why a piece of hot metal does not have precisely the same aura as a living body. Moreover, it would not tell why the contours of this aura change even when there is no measurable change of the local or general body temperature.

In the light of modern research it can be further suggested that what is being made visible is simply an electromagnetic field such as is created by all physiological action, even if it is in the nature of minute potentials of a few microvolts. This is certainly nearer the mark, since these potential differences appear to be directly related to events taking place in mind and body, in other words, to vital phenomena.

Again, many people in the last decades have found themselves able, by using apparatus varying from supposedly electrical machines costing a great deal to simple divining rods or pendulums or even the bare hand, to diagnose the seat of disease and the state of health and vitality of patients. It seems reasonable to think that by these means they too are concerned with the field of emanations around the body and, for that matter, within it...

If we consider all these facts, they simply confirm what clairvoyance says about this matter. And while no two clairvoyants probably agree exactly as to details, there is a very great measure of agreement among them, first that such an aura or atmosphere actually exists; secondly that it presents a projected picture of the physical vital, and of the psycho-spiritual state of the person to whom it belongs.

The aura around living beings, seen clairvoyantly, is far larger than the restricted *atmosphere* by Kilner. His technique appears to have made visible only the inner layers of the whole, that part which roughly follows the outline of the body. Subtler methods of observation show that the total energy field extends a considerable way beyond, and that the general form is ovoid. In a normal person who is alert and active, it would be roughly two yards across at its widest point, while it would extend roughly two feet above the head and below the feet. But these dimensions are very variable, far more so than those of the denser inner aura round the body.

The larger, ovoid aura is an elaborate structure of lines of force which indicate both the actual processes of thought and feeling from moment to moment and the potentialities, developed and undeveloped, of the spiritual and psychic aspects of the individual. It is, in short, a mirror in which the whole man is reflected at every stage of his personal development.

A particular feature of the aura which stands out to the vision of every competent clairvoyant is a series of quickly moving vortices of energy situated at certain points of the body. These were known of old, and are often found represented in ancient diagrams, whether of East or West, on statues or carvings, and so on. But in any case they appear pretty constantly both in ancient traditions and in the perceptions of modern sensitives. Moreover, it is not by any means essential to be able to see to realize their existence, and many people become aware of them through their hands when examining a person with an extra-sensory touch... Their Sanskrit name, *chakra*, is the word for a wheel, and is very suitable and descriptive. They are organs of the psychic aspect of every living creature, and highly complex in structure. Moreover, they are intimately linked with the controlling mechanism of the dense body through the nervous system and the endocrine glands."

Far-Eastern and Ancient Seekers of Truth

In all eras throughout history there were seekers of truth, earnest and compassionate people who strove to understand the meaning of life and foster the interests of all creatures. These people belonged to all kinds of professions and were found among all peoples. Many seekers of truth worked in small circles, and we do not know anything about them today. Others made their thoughts available to the public, and particularly gifted ones were even able to hand their thoughts down to following generations. In this work I would like to present some of these seekers of truth, especially those who served as an example for my own life.

Until this day it has been claimed that the Church teaches enormously precious values to the world. I, however, claim that exactly the opposite is the case, and that I need not really prove this opposite because it is more than evident. The direction the Church has pursued can easily be judged from the climax of its power during the Middle Ages, when faith assumed dimensions which were unacceptable even to many members of the clergy.

I deem it necessary to show that even *long before Christ there lived people who acted wisely and taught charity*. The charity which Christ taught and which the Church has fulfilled only in tiny parts is full of exaggerations. While an animal *naturally* tries to *defend* itself when being *attacked*, Man is taught to wait patiently to receive the next stroke. These pious phrases, which tell us to turn our left cheek to someone who has slapped our right one, have more to do with stupidity than with humaneness and charity. In actual fact the believer is prepared in this way to tolerate renewed strokes, while those with the big brains are allowed to beat others even before anybody has done anything bad to them. Or did the popes march to battlefields or join the crusades in order to offer their cheeks?

The Sermon on the Mount, which is often quoted as one of the finest pieces of the Bible, only comforts »the poor in spirit« to find a better life in heaven, this means those who cannot help themselves: »Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven«. Those who mourn, shall be comforted in heaven, the meek shall acquire a piece of land in heaven, those who hunger and

thirst after righteousness shall be filled. "Rejoice, for your reward in the heavens will be very great." *Such* a philosophy creates good people, lambs who accept everything inflicted on them during their earthly lives! It is very doubtful that Christ really preached such nonsense.

It would be more than necessary to change *religious instruction* in schools in such a way that it is more than just *propaganda for the Church*. It is high time to teach children about Confucius, Lao-tzu and Buddha and about what it means to seek and understand the meaning of life, to recognize the truth, to act wisely and to be *tolerant*.

In the following chapters I will try to describe how it feels *to seek the truth, to love wisdom and to prefer knowledge to faith*. I want to recount a conversation with Thales of Miletus, a restless seeker of truth. Furthermore, I would like to present an informative discussion which took place at the university of Alexandria between a skeptic, a follower of Epicurus and a friend of the Stoa. Finally, I would like to provide information about Confucius, Lao-tzu and Buddha.

I consulted a vast number of reference books, the most comprehensive one being the thirty-six volume history book by *Otto Zierer*, who was able to infuse historical data with lively images and to present them not only in an historically reliable, but also in a *lively and humane way*.

In this context I would like to point out that the interpretation of history does not always necessarily correspond to the actual events. The sources to which historians have to refer may be imperfect, embellished, idealized and sometimes even wrong. Therefore we must not assume that everything we find in print really happened in the way described. Even when falsifications were made unintentionally, there are still many other possibilities of conscious or unconscious distortion of the facts.

For example, if we read reports about how Lao-tzu rode on a buffalo through lonesome places, it is not difficult to detect the legend. But if somebody who heard Buddha speak writes a report on his teachings, he may have misunderstood Buddha, or he may not remember exactly Buddha's words when writing down the report. While copying the report, any other person involved may have made mistakes; furthermore the person who copied the report may have introduced some of his own thoughts and may have corrected the translation in good faith.

We all know how it may happen that a certain person is declared dead. Somebody reports that Mr. Meier has had an accident, the next one says that he had a serious accident; the next person sees Mr. Meier in the intensive care unit of a hospital although he has only broken his leg. And a particularly eager storyteller may even have heard that he has died in the accident.

Of course, things are usually not that bad when it comes to historical data. I just wanted to make clear that the reader should be well aware that one should never believe uncritically each and every written word. And actually it is not so much the correctness of the contents of the single sentences, but rather the *spirit of the people* that form the subject of the report.

Anyone who studies historical traditions extensively will discover in how different a way various books report about the same thing when only the gist is reported. When studying Buddha's life, for example, I consulted various books and found out that even names of people and places were given in a most inhomogeneous way. So it may be even more difficult for the researcher to find out the correct spelling than the historical data itself.

Thales of Miletus

Thales of Miletus lived in ancient Greece; he was born in about 625 B.C. and died around 545. Thales was a merchant, seafarer and philosopher. Based on historical data, Otto Zierer describes the following encounter between Thales and *Epimenides*:

From the surf of the sea, somewhere between Cape Zephyr and the small island of Dia the small brown sail of a ship appears. Slowly, as the ship approaches, the hull of the ship becomes visible too. It is the huge bellied hull of one of those ships which the merchants love so much. The skipper heads for the landmark of Dia, behind which the gentle bay of Knossos expands.

The patron of the ship is the merchant Thales of Miletus. After having arrived at the harbor, he settles all the necessary formalities, pays the duty, provides information about his goods and instructs his captain to unship the merchandise. Despite the burning sun he walks through the streets, which at this hour are totally deserted. He wants to visit his old friend Epimenides, whom he highly esteems because of his wisdom and knowledge.

Epimenides lives in a simple wooden house a bit off the town, near to the legendary »Dictaïc Cave«. An air of mysticism and magic surrounds him. His long, flowing clothes are embroidered with enigmatic signs that resemble those of oriental priests, Chaldean magicians or Egyptian scholars.

Now the two men sit together in the dark, strangely furnished room. In front of them on the table there is a big, funnel-shaped jar, which is decorated with naïve scenes from the heroic tales, and which serves for mixing the dark Cretan wine with water. Thales, whose vast merchant activities also comprises dealing with earthenware, states that this »crater« was made in a Corinthian workshop. Although he only trades earthenware from Athens and Miletus, he admits without any envy that the Corinthian works are still the more artistic ones.

"It's a long time," says Thales, "since we last met. Our journeys to Crete have become rare. The trading activities of Miletus are increasingly concentrated on Egypt. Since King Psamtik allowed the Hellenist merchants to establish the settlement Naukratis, a market of world significance has evolved. We have a common Sanctuary there, the »Hellenion«; Naukratis has become a meeting place for all Greek ships..."

Epimenides smiles and raises his hand to stop his friend.

"Let us talk about other, more important things, dear friend! I do not care whether Hellenic trade in Naukratis is prospering or not. Egypt has more to offer than wheat, oil and dates."

"Very well, let us leave that to one side...!"

Thales keeps silent for a moment, then he continues talking.

"For some time I was a student at an Egyptian school of priests; by the way, I was not the only Hellene there, but I also met the young Solon from Athens. Do you know him?"

"Yes, of course, I have heard about him. But tell me, what have you learned there about the Isis Cult, about the mysteries involved in evoking the dead and about the ancient, holy pictographic writing system? Fortunate you who were able to learn about dark mysteries and magic right from the mouths of those men who know how to solve the riddles of the underworld like no other mortals!"

Thales rises from his seat and walks to the door through which the sunlight flows into the dark room.

Why should I care about mystics and magic? Look at the sun, the sea, the trees and the blue sky! That's reality and true life! What I wanted to learn from the priests was mathematics, astronomy and meteorology; things that are important for me as a merchant and seafarer."

Epimenides touches the amulet he wears as if he wants to mitigate the offended spirits of the underworld.

What sort of worries you have, Thales! Your heart is filled with salesmanship, but you do not care about the only important thing – the fate of your soul. You have hardly changed."

Thales takes a deep drink from his wine glass.

"You should sail the seas, Epimenides, and you would understand many a thing which you are not aware of in the presence of your Gods and demons. Different is the world for those who enclose themselves in it, from those who encounter it face to face.

When you travel over the blue water for days, totally at the mercy of a tiny nutshell, when you do not see any beach nor island, nor mountain at the distance for lending support to your eye, and when you stand at the bow of your ship pondering, or the stormy winds hiss, the waves roar, heavy rains pour down and you tie yourself to the mast for not being blown overboard, and you stand there as a lonesome man amidst an endless, cruel universe, then, my friend, different thoughts come to your mind from when you are safe and secure on firm ground. You have enough time to reflect, nature and your heart urge you to do so. When facing the roaring sea I have often asked myself: Where does all this come from? Then, as a merchant, you wander through foreign countries, meet different peoples, hear prayers in front of the altars of strange Gods, you stand in front of the huge monuments for the dead which were set up thousands of

years ago – the pyramids on the river Nile. The breeze of distance, a breath from the realm of death and the stones' cry for eternity move you. Then another question comes to your mind: What is all this evolving and passing away? This deadly cycle in which you are captured and from which you cannot escape? That's the thoughtfulness of a seafarer and traveler, dear friend, a thoughtfulness which is entirely different from that of the priest..."

Epimenides' eyes glow fanatically.

"You ask for things for which an answer has long been found. The riddles about the where from, the where to and the purpose of our existence are already solved. You know the big secret that unites the Orphic covenant. If you just wanted to join us, Thales, you'd no longer need to ponder painstakingly over these questions or continue your futile search."

"But pondering and seeking, that's what I want!" Thales cries out. "I am not satisfied with the ready-made knowledge the priests and seers present to us: here you are, take and accept it, because that's what the world is like! – No, if I talk of knowledge, I understand it as something that I have searched for and recognized myself, and what I am really convinced of."

"Not everyone is bound to go the long path to enlightenment. But you ought to struggle for the secret of mystic revelations, Thales. This is the highest purpose of human existence. The eternal things were revealed by the Thracian Orpheus. Nobody will ever know more than the Gods revealed to him..."

The merchant smiles an unbelieving smile.

"... of whom nobody really knows, whether, when and how he actually lived!"

"That's what our enemies say! Orpheus did live! How else should he have founded his covenant and have left us his teachings?"

"O no, my friend! All this magic and mysteries come from Asia. I know the melodies of the Babylonian magicians only too well. The Adonis Cult, the secret teaching about Persephone and the messages of Dionysus – all this is not Hellenic. These are thoughts that come from foreign lands, thoughts that conquer the hearts of our people. But above all these are fears of demons - the fear of the abyss of death. Homer did not know any Goddess of death called Hecate who today is worshipped by superstitious people. I attended their celebrations; they were exactly the same rites as the ones the Babylonians celebrated for their gloomy Goddess Labartu.

Look around and see those living. You will find out that everywhere you go the magic of Babylon is winning their hearts. In spring they celebrate the feast of the Anthesterians, which were totally unknown to our predecessors, and they celebrate them according to the traditions of the Babylonian All Souls Feast. To protect themselves against ghosts, they chew hawthorn leaves and spread pitch onto their doorposts. For the deceased they set out pots with seeds and fruits, and they throw honey cakes and other delicacies into the gorges of the earth. When the feasts, which are celebrated with quaking and fear, are finally over, these fools call out to the souls of the dead, of whom they are afraid: »Away, you Kerens, away, the Anthesterians are over! «"

"In fact it is like this," says Epimenides, "but why do you want to argue against it? Isn't it a silver band on the horizon which announces the morning, when people begin to feel that there are not only the dark shadows of the underworld that inevitably await them, but that there are also powers and energies to overcome death and to resurrect and assume a new life?"

"You talk about feelings, Epimenides, but I speak about knowledge! And hope? Hasn't it always been deception that promises things which do not exist yet? No, my friend, I will not succumb to the seduction of these Asian teachings; I cannot believe in Adonis' return, Persephone's resurrection from the dead, or Dionysus' overcoming death. I want a more reasonable explanation of the world. I want to understand the order of the world from my own knowledge."

The priest has got up.

"Listen, oh Thales! If you ask: Where does everything come from? Orpheus can give you the answer. He explains that it was darkness and emptiness, the double-headed dragon that brought forth the egg of the world."

"Stop," Thales vehemently interrupts the fanatic, "All these are confusing claims that cannot be proved. He who believes in these tales will never ever reflect seriously about the primary cause of all things. I do not want symbols but knowledge. And therefore I consider the Orphic teachings more a hindrance rather than a help in research."

"But how do you want to explore the mystery of creation, you, a Man who is bound and subject to fate? Yes, if we were Gods, if we had this Olympic knowledge or wisdom! Have you never felt the conflict of human nature? The yearning ascent of the soul and the earthly gravity and weight of our body which draws us down again? Doesn't the voice in your heart tell you that you need transcendental powers to find redemption?"

If you just once joined our nightly Dionysus celebrations, this growing and ascending through the influence of song, wine, dance and frankincense! And when the soul begins to move its wings, when you think you are surpassing the weight of your spirit, but still in the insuperable awareness to be mortal and to remain bound to Earth – then you feel ecstasy. That is elevation, ascent and fall at the same time!"

"I desire neither ecstasy nor unleashing! I've learned sobriety, courage and defiance. Whether it be futile or not, I have learned about the mysteries of the world through my clear faculty of thought. This does not lead to ecstasy, but it helps prevent me from a sobering fall. It does not cause delusion, but it leads to true results..."

"By negating the world of shades, you also deny light, impudently you turn against the realm of the demons and Gods. A fool who wants to be equal to the eternal ones!"

But Thales does not surrender to confusion.

"Let me make my point clear. To the ignorant crowds the eclipse of the sun is a horrible token of supernatural powers. Egyptian scholars, however, have shown

me how such an eclipse evolves and how it can be calculated even years before it actually happens. Since I have understood this, the sun's eclipse has lost all its horrors for me, and it has become something comprehensible. And it seems to be similar with other if not all mysteries of our existence. We should explore the universe, explain and dominate it, and the world would be much simpler, more natural and free of any fear. The Gods and Demigods that Homer and Hesiod described in such a childish way, endowed with human properties, do not set any limits to my eternally questioning mind. I must realize and understand, otherwise I won't find peace and quiet."

"And what for?" exclaims Epimenides. "What is at the end of your way? Which God awaits you when you fall from human existence into the abyss of the underworld?"

"No God and no demon await me, my friend. It is the selfless love for wisdom, it is philosophy that urges and drives me..."

A Discussion in Alexandria

It is as *Archimedes* or »The Sandreckoner« that a great mathematician and physicist who lived in the third century B.C. in Greece is still well known to us. Among others he discovered the calculation of the square root, the solution to the cubic equation, the laws of the center of gravity, of the oblique plane, of the lever and of buoyancy. He built concave mirrors, catapults, mechanical irrigation screws and pulleys. When he realized what powers his pulleys were able to yield, he was so enthusiastic about his discovery that he exclaimed, "Give me a place to stand on and I will move the earth."

While studying a complicated law case he made a wide-ranging discovery: The goldsmith of King Hieron, who was ordered to make a gold crown and given the exact amount of metal to make it, was suspected not to have used all of the gold but to have used some silver instead. So the weight of the crown had actually been maintained but the quality of the metal itself would certainly have deteriorated due to the admixture of silver. So Archimedes said: If silver, which is much lighter than gold, had really been intermixed, the volume of the crown must be bigger than if it was made from pure gold. But how should it be possible to find out the exact volume of a richly decorated and adorned crown?

Long did he think about this difficult problem. One day while considering the question, the wise man entered his bathtub and recognized that the amount of water that overflowed the tub was proportional to the amount of his body that was submerged.

In order to clarify the controversial case, a gold ingot, such as the one the goldsmith had been given to make the crown, thus had to be submerged in a jar filled with water and the overflowing water had to be measured. Then the same had to be done with the crown. If – compared to the water spilt when submerging the gold in the jar – more water was spilt, it was proved that silver had been admixed to the crown. Actually it happened as Archimedes had suspected – the fraudulent goldsmith was unmasked.

Otto Zierer recounts how Archimedes' travels to Alexandria and meets Eratosthenes of Cyrene, the director of the great library and academy. In deep awe the students and scholars of the Mouseion call Eratosthenes »Mr. Beta« according to the second letter of the Greek alphabet. They want to express that Eratosthenes is worthy to be named second after the intellectual heroes Homer, Heraclitus, Plato and Aristotle.

Eratosthenes is familiar with all fields of science, and so Archimedes, who almost exclusively deals with mathematics and physics, admires the great man for his versatility. The director of the Mouseion wrote an important work about ancient comedies and further developed the mathematical theorems of Euclid; he discovered a formula to double the dice, found the prime numbers and calculated the ecliptic slope. His geographic and astronomical research is more than amazing. To measure the circumference of the Earth, he went on an expedition upriver along the Nile to the town of Syene, which was 5,000 stadia from Alexandria. By determining the angle at noon on the day of the summer solstice in both cities and using the different angles he measured, he managed to calculate the circumference of the Earth and stated a total length of 252,000 stadia!

When Archimedes, accompanied by Eratosthenes, enters the library for the first time, he is overpowered by the size and magnificence of the halls and rooms. The light of the lamps that have just been lit illuminates the richly carved ceilings and reflects in the marble of the columns. The huge number of shelves on which hundreds and thousands of papyrus rolls are preserved in scrolls is amazing. "We are proud to own all the scriptures ever written in the inhabited world," explains Eratosthenes to his guest.

The day before Archimedes leaves Alexandria, Eratosthenes leads him up to the roof garden of the Mouseion. There all the scholars of the High School expect him to join a farewell dinner hosted in honor of the scientist from Syracuse. Chrysippus of Soloi, who has been the director of the Stoic School in Athens since Cleanthes' death, is invited to the dinner as well.

After a rich meal that clearly reflects the ancient Egyptian art of cookery, the discourses of those gathered around the table turn to one of the key questions of philosophy – the conduct of life.

Ephialtes, one of the philosophers of the Mouseion and an ardent follower of Epicure's philosophy, fervently defends a sensible and grateful enjoyment of everything that the day may bring.

"According to the great tradition of our school", he says, "Epicure used to convene his friends every now and then in the big park in Athens to celebrate a cheerful feast. He loved wine, songs, Lydian dancers, the spring and the scenic beauty of the Attic landscape. He taught that pleasure is the supreme good, but it does not merely consist in satisfying one's base needs, but rather in liberating one's soul from pain, fear and quick temper, and in affirming and accepting the natural in such a way as it is presented to and perceived by our mind."

Chrysippus nods and agrees with the scholar. "We Stoics too teach self-control and patient endurance of what destiny inflicts on us. The understanding that

destiny is predetermined and life in virtue is based on reason are the fruits of our philosophical considerations about the meaning of life."

"According to the words of the master," Ephialtes continued, "philosophy provides its disciples with irrefutable certainty, and this certainty means happiness."

"This ability is not given to any human," contradicts Epimenides, one of the teachers of the Mouseion. "Pyrrho of Elis teaches that the conviction that gaining ultimate knowledge is not possible is precisely the prerequisite of true happiness. There is only probability, but never certainty."

Passionately Ephialtes defends the validity of the Epicurean ideas.

"But why should Epicure's way not certainly lead to bliss? His system is complete: logic guides the mind towards certain understanding of the world and its correlations. It unveils to Man nature and its methodical and sober order. Mental pervasion and clarification of all natural correlations eliminate the horrors of superstition, the fears of life and the restlessness caused by eternal doubts. For a man who has understood that the world was not created by Gods and demons, but is the work of forces and matter interacting according to natural laws, and who follows Epicure's advise and takes up Democritus' teaching which says that everything is due to physical interactions among minute indestructible particles – the atoms – for that man the riddle is solved.

Merely pondering causes restlessness of the soul. A knowing man will never be unhappy. He will enjoy life in full pleasure."

When Chrysippus objects and confronts the Epicurean idea of pleasure with the principle of virtue as the only true and desirable value, Ephialtes, with a reconciliatory smile, raises his glass and proposes a toast to the guest from Tarsus.

"Try to see my point, Chrysippus: Epicure has nothing in common with the school of Aristippus of Cyrene that carelessly teaches: physical lust – eating, drinking, feasting and rejoicing – is the only purpose of a wisely lived life, as after death everything is uncertain! Epicure means refined, mental pleasure, the balanced calmness of the soul and spirit, in which all pain and misery is overcome."

The calm, passionless voice of Epimenides interrupts the speaker.

"In my opinion," he says, "the basic principles of the Epicurean and the Stoic systems can be challenged. Pyrrho of Elis, the founder of skeptical philosophy, agrees with Epicure that bliss is our lives' aim, but he does not consider certain knowledge of the world and its correlations a prerequisite for reaching this aim. I repeat once again: there is no absolute certainty. I always have doubts when judgments gained through reason are considered as incontestable. One should be more modest and should not claim anything as irrevocable. As we are humans and our senses and reason are subject to error, every affirmation should start with the words »maybe« or »it seems«".

Eratosthenes, who, like all Greeks, loves witty, relaxed battles of discourse, jokingly turns to Epimenides.

"So, my dear friend, if I for example claim that your wise head is bare like a model sphere in the hall of mathematics, I can claim this as being actually true without any reservations or »maybe«, can't I?"

Everyone bursts into laughter; only the face of the skeptic remains unmoved.

"I even doubt that," he says, "It may seem that there is not a single hair on my head, but who can actually claim that with unchallengeable certainty? Everyone just sees what his sensing organs perceive, but we are all subject to the shortcomings of earthly life. Even when applying the best instruments or tools, our understanding is based on the use of our five senses – this means on five factors of uncertainty. Timon of Phleion, a pupil of the great Pyrrho, says: three questions stand at the beginning of the search for knowledge. First: How are things? Second: How do we react to them? Third: Which consequences result from our behavior? He also gives answers to these questions. The reply to the first one is: All things are unstable and uncertain; the second one: We must never trust our perceptions and ideas; and the third: as we are surrounded by an ocean of instability, changes and uncertainty, the soul has to recollect itself and has to strive for inner peace in order to gain the bliss of not needing to decide, the bliss of humility!"

"But this would mean that every scientific research becomes meaningless," Archimedes objects. "All striving for absolute truth, in particular in physical, mathematical, astronomic, medical and legal sciences would be condemned to fail right from the beginning. And I dare say that the Hellenic sciences since Aristotle have made enormous progress and have yielded considerable benefits for mankind!"

"That may be doubted," says Epimenides. "That can very much be doubted! Have people become happier, calmer, more peaceful or better since then? Do they no longer have to die young? Have they stopped fighting wars?"

Archimedes exclaims in a voice that clearly reflects his agitation. "But I, Archimedes of Syracuse, object: We have helped mankind a lot! Since Herophilus here at my side found a new healing method for diseases of the eye, the eyesight of many people could be saved, and they are certainly happier than if destiny had inflicted blindness unto them! Since Eratosthenes has found a formula to calculate cubic contents, Egyptian officials no longer need to take bushel by bushel out of the granaries in order to find out how much grain is stored for the village. By simply measuring the height and the circumference of the base of a full granary, the volume can easily be calculated. Since I discovered the law of the weights of solids, it has been possible to calculate the exact weight of any block of stone – even the most giant one – from its volume. This helps bridge builders and building masters of temples and houses and increases security in static calculations. It is no longer necessary to support or distribute thrusts and pressures by multiple security measures. It can be calculated in advance how strong the supporting walls and columns or the vaults have to be to resist the thrust of the weight resting on the walls. These are only a few examples of what science has achieved for the well-being of mankind!"

"You have not rebutted my actual objection, Archimedes", insists Epimenides. "I ask you once again: Is Man happier, greater, better now because of these trivial inventions, which you call knowledge? Just the opposite: it seems to me that humans are increasingly losing ground, that they have become more reckless, greedy and cruel! The exact sciences cannot make Man happier; like a blind man on the road, mankind slowly gropes its way ahead, a way which does not lead anywhere!"

Objections are raised everywhere, only Chrysippus agrees with the skeptic.

"Perfection is only given to the Gods. Our existence is governed by laws which nobody knows and which are predetermined. Maybe the day is near when huge fires are lit and destroy all life on Earth."

"O Hellas," exclaims Archimedes in sneering despair, "where have you gone! In which chaos does your world of thoughts end? Disbelievers and people resigning themselves to destiny set the goals we should strive for! If the world of the Greeks pursues this path, Hellas will really perish, and the time will have come for a younger, more powerful nation, which will re-ignite the fire which is extinct among the Greeks."

Eratosthenes takes the wine crater and fills the glass of the Syracuse scholar up to the rim.

"Drink, Archimedes, and don't take things more seriously than they are. This time has not come yet. The old sources of Plato and Aristotle still flow. And those who, like Pyrrho of Elis and his skeptical school, take nothing for unmistakable still open paths for new thoughts. For despite all uncertainty they dare continue to work, to explore, and to reach - if maybe not the truth - at least a high degree of probability."

Confucius and Lao-tzu

To understand better the lives of men like Confucius or Lao-tzu, we must try to project ourselves into the distant past of ancient China, the »Yellow Empire«. While in the lands on the rivers Nile, Euphrates and Tigris the first high civilizations of mankind developed, a rich peasant culture evolved on the fertile loess plateaus of the Hoang-ho region right in the heart of China. The prospering civilization that developed in this area soon gained importance, and its influence expanded widely into the far north and west and extended into the Mongolian steppes where pastoral tribes settled. Under the reign of tyrannical despots, powerful realms evolved and perished again, huge buildings such as the Great Chinese Wall were built and incredible luxury adorned the residential cities of the emperors, while millions of hard-working craftsman and farmers lived a plagued existence in poverty and suppression.

During its long historical development the Chinese civilization and culture grew beyond the borders of its political and military power and spread extensively in the vast regions of Eastern Asia. It extended from the Tibetan mountains to the Japanese islands, and everywhere throughout this vast country the spirit of this supreme civilization was spread, and the philosophy of great men like Confucius and Lao-tzu were disseminated which finally mingled with the mental and cultural heritage of India and the teachings of Gautama Buddha, the Enlightened.

The world of the people settling in these lands is strongly influenced by nature – the fertile but drifting loess soils and the big rivers. It is a world of peasants who live in constant struggle with the ever-changing earth, with wilderness, animals and untamed waters that threaten them. Owing to the natural dangers they constantly face, they try to give the chaos that surrounds them a *logical order* and to *create harmony* from the inextricable.

Most of the popular tales told by the Chinese are centered around those legendary emperors who tackled the most prominent problems threatening the Chinese population and who for some time even managed to cope: to tame the wild rivers flowing through the land of the wandering loess. Practically all generations of Chinese history praise the Emperors Yao and Yu, who built huge dams and canals.

All the colorful tales and myths of this nation are characterized by one particular aspect: *the desire to establish a supreme order, to overcome chaos and strive towards harmony*. The primitive Chinese are peasants who struggle for their arable land and thus have to fight against earth and wilderness, sky and rivers. Their existence is a continuous battle between the elemental, untamed forces and their will to regulate and establish order and reason.

In the late Stone Age the Chinese people are already well aware of the necessity not only to regulate their external life by clearing woods, tilling fields and managing water supply, but also to educate and thus lead human reason and mind to harmony. This basic idea, which goes back to these early prehistoric days, prepares the way for the actual Chinese history and for the Yellow

Civilizations which over thousands of years developed their own specific identity that can still be felt in today's Chinese culture.

Many centuries B.C. the powerful *Chou Empire* evolved under the rule of King *Wen* and his son *Wu*. Many wars were fought by the Chous who were guided by their determination to systematically destroy all memories of preceding dynasties, which had no longer been able to maintain order in the world.

After having successfully completed his wars, the new emperor convenes his attendants, generals and ministers to his fortified palace which is located in the city of Feng, high up on the mountains. From a distance the iron gongs resound solemnly to welcome the guests.

There is no hall in the palace that would be big enough to host the huge crowd of noblemen who want to greet the emperor. Therefore court officials usher those arriving to the big courtyard, whose wooden galleries form a quadrangle around the cistern. A throne has been set up and covered with tiger and leopard furs.

The iron gongs sound again, a corps of musicians beat the fur drums and sounding stones, flutes shrill and bronze cymbals resound when the big bamboo gate opens and Emperor Wu and his male relatives appear.

The Emperor is still young. His face is inscrutable like a mask. His vigorous chin and the fire blinking out of his dark eyes from between his small lids express energy and awareness of power. His speech is calm and full of natural dignity.

He talks about the years of the war, the victories and conquests, which have yielded to the Chou an enormous empire which stretches from the Dragon Mountains down to the sea, yes even as far as to the distant peninsula of Korea. More than fifty new provinces have surrendered to the armies of the Chou.

„But conquest is nothing,” says the emperor, „*order is everything*”.

Now, as the battles have come to an end, it is the highest obligation of the Chou to re-establish harmony in the world. Never shall this dynasty forget that the upheaval of the Yin Emperors was caused by inner chaos and that the Hsia and Yin dynasties had perished because of the disturbed order in their countries.

„Therefore it is our duty,” exclaims Wu, „to establish order now and forever in our own house as well as in all houses of the country!”

And then, in a solemn voice, he promulgates the new laws governing succession and hierarchy.

„I have won great victories and have conquered a huge empire,” the emperor says and a smile embellishes his rigid features. „You, my loyal followers, have helped me. Therefore you shall help me now to govern this empire. But to rule once again means order and harmony. The inferior shall obey the superior, and the emperor shall be above all others. I have the will to divide the Empire of Chou into districts; and each of you shall govern a part of this country, and from time to time shall render an account to me about his deeds. Therefore I shall

appoint a duke or Kung as prince to rule over the provinces. Come to me, my »Small Honorable«, brother T'an, I appoint you prince of Chou! You shall rule over the tribal country of the Chou in the Dragon Mountains."

And once again the silken garments flow, and the sound of clapping echoes from the walls of the palace when the young prince bends his knee in front of the emperor to receive a purple cap as a sign of his dignity. Then the generals, ministers and the great men of the country are called forth to receive from the emperor's hand their investitures with the ranks of dukes.

Then Emperor Wu once again speaks.

"The Empire is founded, the order of the world is re-established," he exclaims. "But never forget that order is only worth as much as the hearts of the men in whose hand it is. As long as the duke is friend, father and protector of his noblemen and peasants, as long as the knight is a good neighbor and benevolent fighter for his peasants, there will be harmony between the throne and the people and peace between the Earth and Heaven."

Every five years Emperor Wu travels through his vast empire. Drawn by fiery stallions, his carriage, followed by riders who bear lances, hurries over the dusty roads of the provinces. In the years of inspection, the emperor leaves in the second month of spring to head for the holy mountain of the east, in summer he travels to the holy mountain of the south, in the eighth month he travels to the holy mountain of the west and in the eleventh month, when snow heavily falls from the sky, his carriage takes him to the sanctuary of the holy mountain of the north.

The dukes send out riders to meet him on his way and to accompany the Lord of the Yellow Empire to the cities and the market squares. Emperor Wu himself lives a life in harmony. At all places that he visits he asks for the oldest men in town and full of hospitality invites them to see them so that they can report about the situation in the country. He never ever relies merely on the reports of his feudal lords. But when there is any man older than eighty, the emperor spares him the tiresome way to the court, and the emperor himself goes to see him, because great is his esteem of age and wisdom.

Often he mingles into the crowds on the markets, and he examines the offered goods that caravans from the far West or South have brought to the country. Whenever some folk singers perform somewhere nearby, he invites them to his camp and enthusiastically listens to their ballads and songs.

But despite all his kindness and benevolence Wu never forgets that he has gained possession of the empire through military power and war. With a strong hand he eliminates all resistance and suppresses any arising riots or upheavals.

The Emperor has given to the Yellow Empire the highest order possible and has established harmony between heaven, earth and humans. His destiny deems his task fulfilled and dismisses him. He dies young and leaves his empire to his minor son, a pupil of the Duke of Chou.

T'an, the »Small Honorable«, is a part of harmony too, and he does not know any personal ambition or lust for power. Loyally he reigns the people and the country on behalf of the young heir. Even centuries later the rule of the Duke of Chou is remembered and praised as an era of peace and justice. A peasant poet wrote the following quatrain:

The crowds seek profit,
The Honorable glory.
The good man esteems success,
The wise man merely the soul!

Under the mild and just rule of the duke and his successors the pressure of the belief in bad spirits and demons loses ground in the people's souls. As they no longer live in fear of the unknown and the untamed, they do not need any explanation about ghosts or demonic beings from a world of horrors. Slave sacrifices in honor of the Gods are abolished and made punishable.

The great duke, who loved music and who considered it a means to mitigate the instinctive and unbridled elements in humans, created a kind of huge orchestra, in which everyone had to play his part in accordance with his significance, competence and grade. But he too was powerless against the future, because in the womb of the future there were hidden threats which inevitably had to penetrate from all sides into the Chou Empire and its people, when once an emperor did not know the high art of directing the enormous orchestra of the state.

The system of feudalism, which he and his elder brother Wu had introduced as the new regime, was as good or as bad as the bearers of power of the various groups. As long as there were strong rulers and dukes, earls and barons who were well aware of their patriarchal tasks and were therefore good representatives of this noble regime, everything worked out well. But woe to the state of Chou when it was governed by weak emperors and when the shepherd who was meant to protect and guide his people became a robber or wolf himself!

The spirit of the duke was still felt many years after his death. Even the fifth emperor of the dynasty of Chou still had the reins of the realm fast in his hands, although the tax burden to be borne by the peasants had become heavier and the pernicious richness of the feudal classes had grown enormously. The treasures accumulated during the five generations of peaceful development and his undisputed power finally motivated Emperor *Mu* to undertake unnecessary and futile military campaigns to the far West with its mountains and deserts, a region which at that time still represented a threatening dark and mysterious gate to adventure.

After the death of Emperor Mu the decline began.

Through arbitrary endowment of land to dukes and barons and repeated upgrading of ranks among the noblemen, the power of the feudal lords throughout the country increased enormously. Under the weak Chou emperors the former feudal states developed into practically independent kingdoms, the earls felt like dukes and claimed unlimited power, the barons saw themselves as masters over the life, death and property of the peasants and increasingly

understood that it was on them to squeeze out as much as possible from the poor people of their land in order to become richer and even more powerful.

So the times of the seekers of truth such as Confucius and Lao-tzu dawned.

Confucius

In today's Shantung Province, near to the city of Dsou, the holy hill of Mu rises. In the year 551 B.C., a woman, while on pilgrimage to the Gods of the mountains, is surprised by labor, and in a cave she gives birth to a boy, who is given the name K'ung-Fu-Tzu (Confucius).

In the far West at that time the great king Cyrus conquers Babylon and delivers the people of Israel from Babylonian captivity. In Greece the great philosophers of the Ionic School lead occidental thinking into new tracks; in Olympia young people from all over Hellas meet for national sports competitions, and in India Buddha, the Enlightened, gathers his disciples around him and teaches asceticism and self-redemption.

Confucius' father descends from the old imperial dynasty of Yin. The family, however, has long been without any influence, although important soldiers, politicians and high state officials were among their ancestors. Before the son Confucius nine sisters are born. Confucius is the tenth child, and startling signs forebode his birth. For this reason his mother undertakes a pilgrimage to the spirits of the mountains, because astrologers have announced to her that the sacred hill of Mu would be a most blissful place for the future of the unborn child.

The small feudal state of Lu, to which Confucius' hometown belongs, is governed by tyrannical dukes. Here the old families still enjoy high esteem, but they do not have the smallest influence in the political guidance of the country.

His father is already seventy years old, when Confucius is born. He dies when Confucius is still an infant. His mother teaches the boy – free of any fears of demons and superstition – ancient legends, traditions and wisdoms. After years of preparation in her own house, she sends the young boy, who is eager for knowledge, to the school of the wise Mandarin Yen.

After having completed the Mandarin's education, the poverty of his family forces him into the tough school of life. At first he becomes administrator of the local granary and tax official. As he fulfils all duties assigned to him with the utmost diligence, the ministry of the State of Lu promotes him to supervisor of all the herds of his local district. Through his work he slowly gains insight into the problems of administration and economy, and he realizes that in this field the old regime has broken down too and is no longer in accordance with the powerful spirits of the mountains, from where China's destiny is determined.

At the age of twenty years, Confucius quits his work as supervisor of the herds of Lu, and despite his youth he gathers disciples around him, whom he wants to teach about a new order. In a country in which age counts more than anything else, it is a very high risk to set up one's own school at such a young

age. Nevertheless the reputation of the young scholar quickly spreads far beyond the city of Dsou within the next few years. Young, ambitious people search the vicinity of the learned man in order to learn from his discourses. One of them is Tzu-kung who holds a modest court office in the imperial city of Loyang and only stays temporarily in the State of Lu.

After his return to the imperial city, a high Mandarin and Minister of the Emperor asks him,

„Is your master a saint? Which skills does he possess?“

Tzu-kung answers, „If heaven allows it, the young Kung will be a saint one day. He possesses many wonderful abilities.“

During another one of Tzu-kung's stays in the state of Lu, Master Kung hears about the Mandarin's interest. So he asks Tzu-kung, „Why does the minister know me who is so miserable? My youth was poor. Neither do I belong to the rich nor the powerful. The only thing I have acquired is knowledge. But no longer do I seek knowledge – today I seek wisdom.“

In awe and admiration the student replies to him, „Who knows like you the way of the ancient rulers and the traditional books of our ancestors?“

Confucius modestly lowers his eyes.

„O Tzu-kung, I explore what is down here on the Earth in order to penetrate what is up there. If I meet any dignified man, I strive to become his equal, but if I meet an undignified one, I examine myself and explore my innermost feelings. Not yet am I wise, but firm do I stand on the ground of truthfulness. At thirty years a man has to stand firm.“

„What, oh master, is it you strive for?“

„I try to become noble myself, before I teach others to be noble.“

„But what, oh honorable, do you consider noble?“

„The noble man knows right and justice, the base one profits. The noble man demands much from himself, the base much from others. The noble man seeks inner values, the base one property. A noble man who is not benevolent may well exist, but there is certainly no base man who is benevolent. The noble man is not judged by trivialities, but he is able to assume the great. The base man, however, cannot assume anything great, but he certainly can be judged by trivialities.“

Tseng-tzu, another of his disciples, rises to speak when Confucius has finished.

„Remember, oh Tzu-kung, the two words in which master Kung's wisdom is founded: »Kung« means to fulfill to the extreme one's duties as man, and »fu« means to treat others as you want to be treated, and it also means to love your neighbor as you love yourself. But four things are totally missing in our Master's

character. He has neither prejudices, nor a stubborn craving for admiration, nor obstinacy nor any sense of selfishness."

At the age of thirty, Master Kung is called to the imperial court in Loyang to become the teacher of the Prince Imperial Ching-wang. His journey to the capital is of utmost significance to Confucius, for everywhere he meets important testimonials and the evidence of the great past of the empire.

As in a dream he walks through the palace district and watches the huge mythical animals chiseled out of stone that guard the paths which lead to the imperial graves. He sees the high, carved arches in front of the temples of the ancestors, the gilded bricks and the cambered ridges of the roofs with their bronze dragons. Well-ordered and powerful was the ancient world of the emperors, for it was filled with benevolence, justice and truthfulness that radiated culture, education and knowledge.

Incredibly rich and comprehensive is the library of the palace at Loyang. Thousands of works of all kinds are stored on the varnished shelves. Most of the books consist of carefully piled stacks of bamboo plates, which are labeled with red linen stripes. Some newer editions are painted on fine linen, carefully rolled and stored in precious containers, which too are labeled with purple linen stripes carrying the title of the books.

Confucius meets Lao-tzu

The scholar from Dsou spends many hours and days in the »Hall of Light« in order to study the wisdoms of ancient times. On one of these days of quiet and blissful work the silence in the »Hall of Light« is suddenly disturbed. His friends and disciples Tzu-kung, Tseng-tzu and Chin quickly enter through the big, silk-lined bamboo gate, and in a state of highest excitement they report to Confucius in an awestruck whispering voice that Lao-tzu, the great Lao-tzu, has just arrived in the palace as a guest of the duke.

Confucius' eyes light up. Silently he puts his writing brush aside and rises from his seat. „This day is a day of heaven," he says in a solemn tone.

The eighty-five-year-old Lao-tzu has nearly become a living legend. A long time ago the age-old man had administered the library at the court of the Chou emperors. Observing the decline of the Chou dynasty, Lao-tzu left the court and headed west. In the distant mountains of the West, he was stopped by Yin-his, the guardian of the frontier pass Hanku.

The guardian said to the old man, „I see, oh Master, that you are disposed to retreat to solitude. But I request you for mankind's sake to write down your knowledge and not let the wisdom of your age be lost."

Lao-tzu had sought the silence of wilderness and found shelter in a cave. There he wrote his books about the world principle Tao and the concepts of highest virtue. According to Lao-tzu virtue means to be one with the spirit of Tao, with the harmony of the world's reason and life. Tao is a cosmic principle,

the great secret way of existence, which only the wise realize. As life, happiness and pain as well as death, love and greatness are only changing stages in the eternally moving stream of existence, only a fool will try to withstand his destiny.

„Knowledge is vain, acting is superfluous. Wishes are harmful, richness, honor and the entire step ladder of pleasure and pain, which offers itself delusively to our senses, is as futile as dreams.“

After having completed his great work, Lao-tzu returns from loneliness into the inhabited world, and one of the first stops on his way is the palace of Loyang.

The entire court, including the Emperor and the Prince Imperial, have gathered around Lao-tzu in the »Hall of Enlightenment«. The wise old man huddles in the middle of the ample room. He is dressed in long, simple garments. His small, inquiring eyes, which do not show any human emotion, examine the young scholar who approaches him in awe and humbly bows in front of him. No movement can be seen in the old man's face, which is marked with pain, disappointment and loneliness and which seems to have found completion in ultimate spiritualization.

The court is silent and everyone watches the two wise men, whose names are widely known among all the learned men throughout the country.

Lao-tzu's voice can hardly be heard. It sounds as if he spoke to himself.

„It is vain to be active for earthly things. The crowd is lethargic and falls back into dumbness again and again. To resist it, is unworthy of a wise man. He should rather retreat into the loneliness of his own soul, seek to explore the secrets of his soul, explore the secret of creation and struggle his way to self-redemption. So, at the end of his life, he may rise from dust to the crystal pureness of the spirit and attain Tao.“

„Adorable master!“ Confucius replies, „allow your undeserving admirer to have some totally different thoughts. The learned man should not seclude himself from the world, but he should use his wisdom in order to help the ignorant. But how can we help if we escape into the seclusion of Tao? I believe that people are what we evoke in them. In man there is everything at one time: the good and evil, the noble and the base, but it always depends what we address and move. To cast light on the noble is the task of every government. Therefore I seek for the most appropriate basic principles underlying human coexistence, principles which are able to restructure the moral relations between humans. These may be ancient and simple rules that everyone understands: Don't hide your grain if others have nothing to eat! Don't deprive a rightful heir of his rights! Don't deprive your neighbor of his livelihood! Be mild in earnestness and severe without cruelty, be eager without pride! These are rules that everyone understands and that are useful for the well-being of the society. You can already find them in the teachings of the ancient emperors!“

There is a long silence in the hall before Lao-tzu's low voice is heard again.

„The ancient emperors are dead, their bones are dust, their deeds are gone. If Man lives in favorable times he may rise. But if the streams of his time are against him, as it is the case in our time, his feet seem to walk as if they were

tied. I have learned that in times of misery the clever merchant who has accumulated riches pretends to be poor in order to escape envy. And this is also true for the man who has accumulated knowledge – he has to pretend to be dumb in order to escape mischief. Refrain from your path, K'ung-Fu-Tzu, for you will not be able either to penetrate the morass of the base!"

„Wise and great scholar!" Confucius replies in awe, „Pardon me for my foolishness. But in the inexperience of my youth I believe that there is a way to improve the world. We have to precede and encourage other people and must not become tired!"

„The people will not follow you, Master Kung!"

„We have to turn to them in dignity, and they will learn awe. We have to teach our neighbors charity and love for children, and they will be loyal. We have to raise the good and teach the unknowing, and they will strive for the best!"

Lao-tzu closes his eyes as if in tremendous exhaustion and tiredness. „Oh Kung!" he says, „What do you, who are without authority, want to effect? He who is somebody else's son has nothing but what he owes to his father; he who is somebody else's official has nothing because he owes everything to this other one. Everyone who like you unveils the mistakes of his surroundings through his conduct and sermons brings himself into danger! Look around, master Kung! Look around this hall and see how many who are lower and less learned than you are decorated with precious golden, crystal or emerald buttons on their bonnets, but you only bear the sign of the lowest rank!"

„Of course you are right," Confucius answers with a smile, while an indignant murmur runs through the lines of the Mandarins. „We often seem helpless, and often do we preach in deserted mountains. Where we speak to the people, we harvest hatred. And nevertheless I keep hoping without getting tired. It is written in the books: Truth will win in the end..."

Lao-tzu's face is unmoved as it was at the beginning of the discourse. Silently he points his hand to the window which is lined with transparent silk gauze. On the paved square in front of the »Hall of Enlightenment« there is a bronze statue of a former minister who had become famous because of his farsighted caution. The lips of the statue are sealed with three latches.

„Have you read the inscription?" the old man asks. „Be careful when speaking! Don't speak too much for the word leads to mischief."

Lao-tzu gets up with difficulty, and two servants hurry to help him. With a loving, affectionate gesture the white-haired man places his hand on the shoulder of the young man.

„Great is the lonely man, and he is a saint!" he murmurs. „Everything earthly rises from the Tao and returns to it again. The utmost human goal is to be one with the law of the world, the ultimate moral determination is not doing, but being."

The Way of Heaven:
It does not strive; yet it wins easily.

It does not speak, yet it understands how to answer.
It does not call, and yet everything comes.
It is gentle, and yet it understands how to plan.
Heaven's net is big,
and despite its wide meshes nothing escapes from it!

„But how,“ Confucius insists, „how shall the evil of the time disappear, how shall mankind improve and rise if we do not act? Isn't an idle authority more to be feared than a wild tiger?“

Something reminiscent of a smile appears on the wrinkly features of the old man.

„Go your way, Kung! You can't help it, it is your Tao. But I tell you, yours will be futile efforts and in the end you will find disappointment!“

Years go by, and still Confucius continues his learning. His work as a teacher in Loyang only exists formally and hardly brings him any income. He lives in poverty from dried meat and fruits which his disciples offer him. He often speaks to them about the life of a scholar:

„A man, whose mind is set on truth, and who is ashamed of bad clothes and bad food, is not fit to be discoursed with.“

He does not accept stupidity and laziness.

„Rotten wood cannot be carved, and a wall built from dirty earth cannot be whitened. I will not make accessible truth to anyone who is not able to summon up enthusiasm, and I cannot help anybody who is not able to express his thoughts. He who is not able to explain three other sides of a problem after I have enlightened one side of it, will no longer be taught by me.“

In these years, in which he has access to the big imperial library in Loyang, Confucius starts to compile the »Books of Records« from reports of ancient times, the »Book of Rites« according to traditions of the Duke of Chou and the »Book of Odes« compiled from a collection of old folk songs.

Whenever he works on these works, he thinks of the task which he has given to his life: to improve the government and the society and to tame chaos. Among the educating intellectual forces, of which he hopes to gain refinement of the human soul, he considers music as particularly important.

Time passes by, and it is blown away just like the loess dust of the hills is blown away by the winds; it flows like the rain that washes away the earth from the mountains and washes it down to the bed of the Hoang-ho river. Weeks, months and years pass and with them master Kung's lifetime. He writes sad verses:

The storm howls through the valleys,
Heavy summer rains pour down.
Driven out of my home,
I wander through foreign lands

Without purpose nor aim.
Dark, dark is the mind of Man!
In vain virtue wants to help.
And time is flying,
Soon dreary age is near.

Confucius' Wandering Years

Confucius decides to leave the court of Loyang. The city of a powerless emperor does not offer any office for the reformer in which he would have the chance to work effectively and realize his ideas. Intrigues, envy and hatred rule at the court. The people do not listen to him – so Lao-tzu was right!

When spring brings along sun and warmth, Master Kung takes his walking stick and together with some selected disciples he wanders from one prince's court to another in order to find some despot who would give him the chance to set up an ideal regime for the future, a regime in which everyone is meant to be happy and content.

But everywhere he goes, he meets decay of the government and decline of social morals.

At the court of Prince Dsi dancing girls have the say. At the courts of other dukes the noblemen waste the taxes collected from the peasants and citizens. Master Kung desperately complains to his disciples, „If this can be tolerated, what is it then that will not be tolerated?"

His disciples are scandalized too, and they call for upheaval and revolution, „For the wise man there are neither noblemen nor base men, but only humans! The differences between the ranks have to be abolished!"

„That is not wisely spoken, my friend!" master Kung replies. „In fact there is a nobleman as there is a base man, just as there are different kinds of birds like the sparrow and the bird of paradise. But I do make a difference between inherited nobility without merits and noblemen who have gained their nobility due to their own merits. The true noblemen's thoughts are directed only towards the noble, but those of the others are directed towards the low. In a state of true order the social differences will not totally be eliminated, but they will be assigned according to actual merit. Everyone will have to fulfill the role assigned to him; a state is good when the prince is a prince, the minister is a minister, the father is a father and the son is a son."

When the group of wanderers reaches the residence of Prince Yang-ho they find confirmed all the rumors about the immorality and corruption ruling there. Every day the court celebrates opulent feasts, while the population is starving and is tormented by corrupt officials. In silent protest Confucius settles down in the district of the poor. Even when Prince Yang-ho sends him presents in order to invite the scholar to his court, the wise man keeps away from the palace.

One day while Confucius stands at one of the city gates called »Rose Gate«, Mongolian slaves carry by Yang-ho's palanquin. It is accompanied by soldiers bearing bamboo lances and dancers who beat cymbals and drums in honor of the prince.

Yang-ho beckons the master and reproachfully asks him,

„I was told that you praise yourself as being benevolent? But to keep one's treasure locked up in one's own heart and let the country err, can this be called benevolent?“

„No!“ Confucius answers frankly.

„The days and months pass by, oh Master. They are waiting for you!“

Confucius hesitates for a moment. Then he says,

„Well, I am willing to assume an office...“

The satisfied prince makes a sign to his slaves, and the colorful procession continues on its way, accompanied by the rhythm of the drums.

Back home in the poor dwelling they have rented, the disciples ask their master why he follows the call of a tyrant who has such a terribly bad reputation. „Have we not heard the master speak before: Keep away from him who is not noble in person?“

„Yes, that's what I have taught you,“ replies Confucius, „but it is also true that the solid cannot be ground, but only abraded. Therefore I want to try to make Yang-ho a better man.“

His attempt fails already a few weeks later. The prince grows angry when Confucius rebukes him for his luxurious way of life. He had expected an assistant, not someone to warn him. The disappointed prince chases the inconvenient man away. Master Kung leaves the city followed by the mocking laughter of the court.

„Oh,“ he says, „this was not important! If I only had a few more years, I would study the »Book of Changes«, which I do not yet know sufficiently. With its help I would certainly be able to avoid such big mistakes.“

He studies, ponders, works on himself and waits for his hour to come. When he is fifty years old, destiny gives him another chance.

Mandarin in the State of Lu

A former disciple of Confucius, who in the meantime has gained a high-ranking Mandarin position in the State of Lu, recommends to the governing prince Kung's recall to his home country.

A most honorable invitation is sent to the master, and happily he makes his way back to his country. While on his way he learns that the state of Lu is in a desperate situation owing to its internal and external disorder.

He travels down the big stream on a princely galley. In triumph he makes his entrance into the city. His way leads him through secluded yards, past splashing fountains, glittering ponds and high stone statues. The guest is carried over curved wooden bridges, through a small park up to a terrace that is illuminated with lampions and finally into a hall, from whose lacquered frames silk banners hang down. Behind a grating painted in coral red stairs lead up to the throne.

To the right and left of his way Mandarins of all ranks await his arrival. Following the instructions laid down in the Book of Rites, which was compiled by the Duke of Chou, they hide their hands in the wide sleeves of their garments and keep their arms crossed in front of their chest.

Ting, the Prince of Lu, dressed in yellow silk, sits in front of the green lion banner and awaits his guest.

Master Kung bows deeply, and in turn all Mandarins bow to greet him. In this moment he believes he has reached his life's goal. Finally he is given a field on which to sow and maybe to harvest his fruits.

At the same time with Confucius, his former students arrive from everywhere in the country; most of them become state officials in order to help the master in implementing his ideas.

His right hand is his favorite student Yen-hui, an ingenious, gifted young man, in whom Confucius sees his mental heir. To his inner circle he appoints the brave, quick and energetic Dsi-lu, who follows him in great loyalty, Dsi-hao, who descends from a peasant class, Tseng, who diligently collects all his discourses and aphorisms, and his son Li.

Soon the master is promoted from his position of a city prefect to the high office of a minister for public work and justice. During the solemn inauguration ceremony for his office as minister for justice and legislation he presents his reform program to the assembled royal household.

„Allow your humble servant Kung," he respectfully addresses his prince, „to try to explain the reasons for the confusion, the disorders and the numerous plagues of our world. The sun, the moon and stars, the clouds, winds, rain and the heat of the summer, they all carry in themselves their own spirit... All nature lives in harmony, and its order has to be continued into a sound human hierarchy. But this natural order is disturbed by two diseases: by the continuous wars people fight against each others and by the bad example the powerful set to their subjects."

An agreeing murmur is heard among Kung's students. The Mandarins, however, remain unmoved; their faces are rigid and lifeless like masks.

Confucius takes a deep breath, his face is flushed. What he now wants to propose as a practical measure is so new and so incredible that it will certainly meet fierce resistance.

„The state of Tsin is Lu's ancient hereditary enemy," he says firmly. „Both countries arm themselves because they are afraid of each others. They spend their economic wealth on financing war expenditure. And to be always alert and prepared to fight, sooner or later inevitably leads to war itself. Therefore I suggest that we destroy our weapons, demolish our fortresses and prohibit the carrying of arms in the state of Lu."

General Tsong, the commander of the troops, jumps to his feet. His face is red with anger and he touches his sword.

„If we do such an insane thing, we will be soon easy prey for the men of Tsin!"

The prince himself, whose perplexity is more than obvious, calls for silence and asks Kung to explain his idea.

The master raises his voice to express his accusation:

„Killing one person is considered a capital crime and is punished by death. According to this principle killing ten people would be ten times as criminal and thus should be punished with ten times death; killing a hundred people then must be a hundred times as unjust and should be punishable one hundred times. All civilized people of this world condemn killing of a person as a crime, but nobody condemns killing in wars in which thousands of people are killed; but they rather appreciate war. So little do we people know about what is right and what is wrong."

Once again a hostile murmur runs through the circles of advisers, but Kung gives nobody the chance to speak and directly addresses the prince now.

„Now, most adorable prince, I want to discuss the second important aspect: how to heal these internal harms. To govern means to do what is just! If you, dear prince, assume guidance, who should dare to do something unjust?

Every state may evoke two kinds of forces in its subjects: the good and the bad. To create order means to support the good and give them power, for the people obey the good. But if you support the bad in order to suppress the good, you support - for the sake of taxes - the gambling houses, the reckless tax collectors and informers, and let the police - for the sake of your rule - apply violence and arrest people. So you support the bad, and the state decays; for each state is only as firm as the love of the people who carry it.

See, the human soul possesses five basic moral instincts. We call them Yen, I, Li, Ji and Hsin. The symbol standing for »Yen«, which means benevolence, is composed of two different characters: one of the characters stands for »Man« the other is a numerical character and means »two«. But what does benevolence mean? It is the relationship between myself and the others, it is just behavior towards my fellows, it is charity.

Therefore I recommend you: When at home, be polite; when doing business, be respectful; when in contact with other people, be loyal, even when dealing with barbarians. That is what I call »Jen«, true benevolence.

»I« means righteousness, it means tolerance and respect for your fellow's rights. By »Li« I mean everything that is prescribed by tradition and rites: reverence, politeness, decency and cultivation of the arts. Teach your people politeness, dear prince, and you will see how they will try to return it to you. Politeness means taming rawness.

But what do I understand by »Ji«? It means striving for knowledge that finally cumulates in wisdom. Never will any truthful Man be complacent and frugal while striving for knowledge and virtue. To be endowed with wisdom right from birth would be ideal. To obtain wisdom through learning comes next. To be dumb but yet to learn in order to acquire wisdom comes next. But to be dumb and not to learn – that's the style of the base ones.

»Hsin«, the last of the basic human instincts means reliability and truthfulness! The character that stands for this concept is formed from the symbols for »Man« and »word«. It shall remind us that every man has to keep his promise..."

The master makes a deep bow in front of the prince who subsequently rises from the throne and, pondering, dissolves the audience.

For five years Master Kung and his disciples work in order to tame the bad instincts of Man; for five years they build dams against the destructive forces that again and again break out from the hearts and brains of the people.

The State of Lu, once liberated from the burdens of its arms and the fears of war, prospers and grows rich, so rich that it causes envy in its neighboring states.

The Duke of Tsin attempts to break the power of Lu's wise minister by applying a strange, but most effective means. He sends the Prince of Lu eighty charmingly dressed female slaves who know the arts of dancing and singing as well as those of love and seduction. Furthermore the envoys give him a special gift of honor - an entire arsenal of battle horses, armors and swords.

Master Kung realizes the danger of the gifts which have apparently been sent as a peaceful and neighborly token, and he warns the sovereign to reject them. The dancers would seduce to pernicious pleasures the officials and noblemen of the court who had been educated to live in modesty and virtue; and the battle horses and armors would certainly raise the martial instincts of the knights and direct their thoughts to conquest and violence.

But the prince has long wished to break out of the boredom of a well-ordered life, too. The audience hall remains closed to the warning master who has become inconvenient to the prince. In the courtyards of the Yamen merry songs, the sounds of cymbals, string instruments and shawms are heard, and there is laughter of frolicking men and women. In a stupor they celebrate the long desired liberation from virtue. In front of the city gates the former military officers exercise their skills in using arms and mock the students of the master.

For five years Confucius has tried to change human nature. Now he has to realize the futility of his attempts.

After having waited in vain for three days to be granted an audience with the prince, he resigns from his office and quits the court of Lu. Followed by the most loyal of his friends, he leaves his home country, and without any aim he wanders upstream through the vast land of China. He is fifty-five years now and has lost all his hopes.

Years of Delusion

Rain pour down from the sky, and the clouds fly close over the mountains; sometimes the fog clears up a little and the peaks of the distant mountains can be seen.

In the gorges of the Wei-ho river the waters roar, and foaming yellow floods swirl round the cliffs, fall down rocky barriers and swell beneath the narrow towpath which has been trodden into the rocky walls by generations of porters.

On the narrow and rocky path, which hardly allows room for two men walking side by side, the master wanders with his followers. In silence they trudge beneath the waterfalls that pour down from the rocky walls and burst from the clefts. Their bast coats, which resemble those worn by poor underlings, hardly protect them from the rain which seems to penetrate everything.

When night comes, the tired pilgrims only find a derelict hut, in which they have difficulties in lighting a weak, smoking fire. From the semidarkness Confucius' lamenting words, sometimes drowned by the pouring rain, can be heard.

„The people and their foolish deeds
are a symbol of the evil of this country.
They have driven me away from home.
Death and decay is etched into their faces;
virtue escapes to foreign lands.
There I have to travel, too.
The work of my life is destroyed;
forgotten is everything that I have taught;
homeless must I wander to the very end...”

His favorite disciple Yen-hui tries to comfort him and speaks about the injustice of human fate:

„Oh, how unjust is destiny! A man like you is neglected, but the bad ones go dressed in silk and gold!”

But Confucius has regained his composure again. He warns his student to have awe of superior powers. „We must not struggle with our fate! Heaven does not speak.”

His companions, however, who are in a bad mood because of their hunger and the pouring rain, raise their objections. Dsi-Lu acts as their speaker.

„Master, who shall not despair in a situation like ours? Heaven pours floods of water on us, the river threatens us, cold winds blow from the mountains and nowhere near or far is there any benefactor to sate our hunger.“

„The noble man remains firm in misery,“ Kung repeats, „Only the base man is weak when struck with misery.“

He lies down on the cold, humid floor, covers his face with his woolen garment and closes his eyes.

Again years pass by slowly, like the boulder clay of the Hsin-gan hills. The master is more than sixty years old already. Sometimes he is ill, and often he is tired and exhausted. As in the North of the country there is no place for him to stay, his journey takes him back to the South until he reaches the valley of the Yangtze River. There fever strikes the weak man, he falls seriously ill and for weeks lies sick in a poor farm hut. His misery is unbelievable, and he laments to Yen-hui:

„Oh, if there was just one who would make use of me! After twelve months his land would be much better off, and after three years it would be complete!“

After his recovery all the attempts of Master Kung to find a protector are in vain. The powerful men of the Yellow Empire are not willing to give up pleasure, passion and lust for power in order to adopt the ascetic way of life the master teaches.

After numerous adventures and deprivations Master Kung has nowhere else to go than to the solitude of the mountains in the West. After having wandered through practically all regions and districts of China, the group of pilgrims approaches the jagged mountains of Szechwan. The rivers Yangtze and Jalung roar and thunder through the deep canyons. Only few people dwell in this deserted place, which is infested by wolves, tigers and bears.

Pious eremites, disciples and followers of Taoism, lonely thinkers, magicians, ascetics and escapers from the world dwell in remote caves. They call themselves the »hidden wise men of Lao-tzu«.

High up on the mountains Kung's disciples, while searching for the way, meet two of the most famous eremites of Lao-tzu, the »Ever-resting« and the »Totally-immersed«. The two ascetics are dressed in furs and draw a wooden plough through the stony soil of their fields.

The »Totally-immersed«, a small, hunchbacked old man with a long beard, asks Dsi-Lu, „Who are you and where are you bound for?“

„I am a disciple of the wise Confucius of Lu!“

The eyes of the repentant blink passionately.

„We have heard about him! Isn't he this simple-minded man who tries to tame the streams and to dam the flowing loess? So you follow a master who tries to

teach the people. But for you and all the others it would be much better to follow teachings that preach solitude."

When later Dsi-Lu tells his master about this incident, Kung is deeply moved.

"Oh, Lao-tzu!" he sighs. "Once again I encounter you in these ascetics! You predicted effort and disappointment to me, but I had to teach humans, for animals and birds don't comprehend me. But if I didn't talk to humans, to whom else should I speak? This world requires a caller!"

Even the silence of the mountains repels him. All searching and wandering is in vain. The master is sixty-eight years when he decides to return to his home country Lu.

The news about his return spread like wildfire. Crowds flock together to greet him, among them many of his former pupils to whom he had once taught the order of life. Only the great ones of the country, the prince, the Mandarins and barons keep silent.

But the fool at the court of Dsou often wears the garment of a wandering scholar and mockingly sings a new song:

O Phoenix! O Phoenix!
How wasted is your life!
The past shall not be reprimanded,
The future will never be reached:
Your song – it is over now and forever!

Confucius smiles, when he hears about the sneering song of the fool. He now knows that his years of wandering and misery have not been in vain. At the age of more than sixty years he has found the measure of all things, and he understands that the world can never be changed by only one single person in one single generation. He no longer makes any attempts to interfere in the machinery of politics as a minister or statesman, but he fosters his teaching and tries to save it for the future by planting it in as many perceiving hearts as possible.

Confucius lives his last years in strenuous work. His four books, the classical Yi-ching, the »Book of Odes«, the Li-Chi, the »Record of Rites«, the collection Xiao-ching, the »Book of Records«, and the history of the State Lu with the title »Spring and Autumn Annals« are completed. For some time the seventy year-old wise man works on his »Book of Changes« – the I-Ching, which is a very mysterious work. It is meant to explain the origin of life, but many of his aphorisms are so dark that even the most gifted of his students do not understand them.

At the age of 73, that is at the same age as his father, Confucius dies and returns to his ancestors. His friends bury his body and guard it for seven days in solemn mourning. Soon afterwards his loyal followers build a temple over his grave. Here the admirers of his teachings gather on solemn occasions, talk about his teachings and play his beloved music. In this sanctuary some of his clothes, hats, lutes and books are kept for a long time.

The Time After Confucius and Lao-tzu

Lao-tzu's school loses itself in romantic and mystic visions. While the world is increasingly prone to decay, the disciples of Tao delve into dark secrets. They live in the mountains as eremites, mortify the flesh and try to master fate through breathing exercises, solitude, meditation and concentration. The people consider these Taoist ascetics as magic priests who are familiar with the powers of heaven and of the world of demons. The eremites of the mountains are feared, because they possess all kinds of wonderful elixirs made from roots and herbs that are said to grant eternal life. On the other hand the rationalists of the classical school, which is targeted at practical benefits and which is practiced above all by Master Kung's successors, turn against these magic myths from which they assume that they can never lead to redemption.

One of the best-known of these philosophers who strives for practicality is Master *Mo-tzu*. He deeply admires Confucius although he fiercely criticizes the practical inability of Confucius' true followers and against many of Master Kung's teachings, which he rejects because he considers them as idolization and useless idealism. He denies any reasonable usefulness of his rites, ceremonies and sacrifices, yes, he even attacks the master's great love of music.

Mo-tzu's fierce criticism springs from his repeated demand for practical charity.

„What can dead rites and raving music do to us as long as the people suffer of three enormous woes!“ he writes painfully. „The hungry have nothing to eat, the freezing have nothing to wear and the toiling have no peace and quiet. Can they be given food or clothes by simply playing the pipes and flutes to them?“

His appeal in favor of humaneness is deeply moving and anticipates ideas which only appear in the Western world much later.

„Do to your neighbor as you would like to be done to. If your neighbor starves, give him to eat; if he freezes, give him clothes; if he is ill, nurse him; and if he dies, bury him!“

But philosophical systems cannot change the world, especially when they, as is the case with Mo-tzu's philosophy, scare the crowds because of their dogmatic severity and if they violate the love for formulas and rules which is so deeply anchored in the thoughts of the Chinese people.

In this time of decaying philosophy, the ideas of the wise man *Yang-chu* who comes from Southern China, find much better acceptance. They demand »total life« which must not be disturbed by ambition or lust for profit, nor by too much activity. This approach thus represents a turn away from inevitable and self-tormenting chastity.

„A hundred years,“ says master Yang-chu, „are the absolute limit to a long lifetime. That some man becomes a hundred years old, happens once in a thousand cases. Supposing there was such a case: childhood that is spent in the

mother's arms, and dumb senility consume about half of one's lifetime. The time we spend unconscious while asleep and while away during the day consumes nearly the other half. Shall the rest of our time pass by in disease, pain, sadness and worry? Maybe there are ten years of merry satisfaction left, but even then there is hardly any carefree hour. What is human life? What are its pleasures?"

He assumes that Man has a natural right to enjoy, to dream and to rejoice whenever he has the chance to do so. For Yang-chu true peace of the mind and freedom from fear and pain seem to be utmost completion.

It is a strange coincidence that nearly at the same time the School of Carvakas in India and the School of Epicure of Samos in Greece evolve, which both praise as true bliss enjoyment of one's life in a carefree way.

Gautama Buddha

My lexicon describes Buddha as an »Indian founder of religion«. From this information one might assume that Buddha taught faith and founded a religion. In actual fact, however, men like Buddha, Confucius or Lao-tzu were seekers of the truth and men with enormous hearts. None of them taught anything about a God or demanded faith. *Jean-Michel Varenne* says in his book »Zen« that Buddhism is a religion without a God. He points out that Gautama's search is human through and through and not based on any divine assignment or prophecy. So his message of salvation is not based on any transcendental authority but addresses humans here and now. The Buddhist search has its roots in everyday life and does not refer to any heavenly condition.

I could not find the word »faith« in any of Buddha's aphorisms, but I repeatedly came across the words »search« and »knowledge«. In Buddha there was a burning desire for truth. He longed to solve the riddles of life and to be liberated from the wheel of earthly life to which, according to him, he and all humans are bound.

The Time Before Buddha

Many centuries before Christ, the Aryans, who had invaded India, formed a *caste system*, maybe to distinguish themselves from the dark-skinned indigenous population. At that time there were four castes: the warrior-kings, the priests (Brahmans), the peasants and the non-Aryans. Their knowledge was passed on in a sophisticated, poetic language, Sanskrit. The Aryans called their holy knowledge the »Vedas«. From the Vedic religion Brahmanism and Hinduism slowly evolved.

The great diversity of life in their country teaches Hindus that not all creatures are equal from birth. An endless ladder leads from the lowest human being to the higher ones, to the warriors, kings, saints and priests, and after having climbed thousands of steps, it finally ends in the tower of the Gods. The greater the

pureness in thought, words and deeds during a human's life, the nearer the human comes to the divine.

The rules that govern the world and to which every creature has to conform represent the highest standards for a naturally and morally purified life and thus determine a creature's stage in its existence. This law is called Dharma.

For this reason every class of people has its specific customs, rules and limits, which are dominated by religious ideas. Nothing is left to mere chance, everything is laid down in rules. The basis of all customs is religion. Therefore the Hindus consider all their customs as inviolable, because they are deeply religious.

Towards the end of the age of conquests and migrations, apart from the elevated class of the Brahmans and the class of the noble warrior-kings (Kshatriyas), a third class, namely the Vaishyas, the class of the peasants, tillers and craftsmen, emerged. The population was therefore structured into castes of which each had to fulfil its specific task in Dharma. Under the rule of the three main castes, the mass of the people lived in poverty. This fourth caste, which were referred to as Shudras and would later be called Pariahs, were rejected as the »unclean«.

Since Dharma, according to Brahman ideas, is a natural law directly derived from the Gods, it was impossible to break out of this regime. Over the centuries numerous sub-castes proliferated and developed out of the four main castes because of local structures, mingling within the castes, division of work and internal splits. But the social separation – in particular the great gap to the foreign race of the Dravidians – remained, and there was no bridging this gap between the invaders and the indigenous population. Intermarriage was forbidden, even eating together was not allowed. If the shadow of a Pariah fell on the food cooking in the pots of an Aryan peasant, this peasant removed the pot and fed the food to the animals.

The members of the higher castes increasingly came to believe in only one God while the simple people kept believing in innumerable Gods and demons. For the members of the higher castes all creatures, animals, people, demons, angels and lower Gods are subject to only one, pure spiritual being. They call this being Vishnu or Shiva. Neither those believing in Vishnu nor those believing in Shiva are intolerant. They tolerate each other and realize that Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma and all the other Gods do exist, but for every group another God is the all-embracing spirit of the world.

The Soul or Self, the Atman, appears in all religious directions and is seen as a part of the great, super-personal Brahma – the world's spirit. Liberation from the many bonds of human existence, of fate and appearance, takes place in a thousand-fold existence and leads into the endless cycle of rebirths. The last collection of the Vedas are the mystic teachings of the Upanishads, in which a different religious world of beliefs is presented.

In the solemn verses of the priests' secret teachings it is explained how, in the innumerable stages of existence, all living creatures have a divided body: on the one hand they have an earthly, material body and on the other hand an ethereal body which accompanies the soul on its journey through time until it finds

salvation, while the other body is the dense body which dies and is reborn again and again.

Spiritual life in India became more and more manifold and diverse. The peasants and craftsmen lived in fear of the spirits and gods, they clung to the rules, the laws of the castes and ancient traditional rites, they made sacrifices in holy caves, on hills with carved wooden temples or at lotus ponds, they worshipped animals, trees and mountains and felt lost in the whirling circles of the supernatural, they dwelt on the edges of the abysses of enchantment and magic. But many thinkers, searchers, struggles – Brahmans, poets, princes, knights or merchants – abandoned everything that had satisfied them in their lives until then and withdrew to the solitude of the mountains or forests. They became ascetics, begging holy men; for them it was not the sacrifices of the priests, nor ambitious activities amidst the people that led them out of the deadly cycle of births, it was meditation, renunciation, pondering and spiritualization that led to salvation.

They all sought salvation. Existence with all its contradictions hurt these sophisticated people who had grown weary of fighting. The only thing their heart longed for was to smilingly become one with the soul of the world – self-realisation.

On all roads saintly penitents wandered through the country and taught the thousand ways to attain the divine – but every man has to go his own way.

In about the middle of the sixth century B.C., there were sixteen Aryan states in the region between Peshawar – the capital of the state of Gandhara – and Ujjain, of which the kingdoms of Magadha and Kosala were the most important ones.

Buddha's Youth

In the northeast of the country, at the foot of the Himalayas, was the kingdom of the Sakyas. It was a land of light-skinned, tall people whose rich noble and merchant families spent the warm seasons not in the towns but in lovely parks with airy pavilions and flower-bordered ponds.

In one of these parks – the Lumbini estate – a son named Siddhartha Gautama was born to the Sakya King Shuddhodana and his wife. The boy, whose mother died young, grew up under the care of one of his father's concubines. His childhood was alternately spent in the capital of the kingdom, Kapilavatthu, and the wide, fertile park landscape of the country. The Sakya court in Kapilavatthu was, like so many other courts of the tiny kingdoms of the region, the intellectual and cultural centre of the country. The court officials were poets or philosophers, people came together to listen to the singers who performed the verses of the Vedas or of ancient heroic songs that dated back to the time of conquest, and they gathered around mysterious saints in order to listen to them when they read from religious books.

Siddhartha received his first impression of the eternal powers which shape the world in thoughtful, allegoric tales which he was told by his teachers. With his legs crossed, Siddhartha rested on a pillow in the richly furnished, painted apartment of his father's house and listened to the storyteller's words:

„And the minister, who was a wise man, spoke to the king, who had lost all his joy of life, and advised him to make a pilgrimage. So the king took a vacation and went on pilgrimage. While settled down on the beach praying to the God of the Sea, suddenly a tree with a golden trunk and branches abundantly covered with jewels and sprouts emerged from the sea, and on the tree – settled on a palanquin pillow – a lovely maid with a lute in her hand was sitting. And the maid sang the following verses:

»The seed which one sows in the land of deeds – whether good or bad – will be harvested by him according to the eternal law. On fate the entire world with all its Gods, spirits and humans depends. And the deeds of a former life – whether good or bad – give cause for rebirth or destruction of all humans...«

After having sung these verses, the mermaid disappeared into the waves in the same manner as she had appeared. But the king returned to his city...”

Solemn and voluminous sounds the voice of the storyteller, but the boy Siddhartha still hears the echo of the mermaid's words.

What meaning does all pleasure in life have when in the end inevitably there is death? What does it mean to be a prince, to have a rich house and to play with jewels when all one's deeds, thoughts and events culminate in rebirth?

But the boy was still young, only a child who rejoiced when spring returned after a long and cold winter, and who felt the abundance and wonders of summer and the liberating freshness of winter. In front of the gates of the city Kapilavatthu, huge rice fields abundantly bearing fruits extended between canals, locks, woods and groves, soaked with the abundant waters coming down from the Himalayas. When the rains were over, the Sakyas moved out to the countryside. Long-horned zebu oxen slowly trod under the yoke, and wooden ploughs worked the steaming earth.

Siddhartha lay under an elephant tree, the sun conjured pearls of light into the leaves, bees and bugs hummed in the branches. Grasses softly rocked in the gentle spring winds, and powerful life radiated from Mother Earth.

A feeling of being one with all existence overcame the young Siddhartha. He wanted to reach out and embrace the earth, grass and trees, clouds and wind and mountains, and he wanted to merge into the great silence of the universe. When silently staring up to the leaves of the trees or to the blue of the endless depth of the sky, questions entered the boy's mind, questions that the priests and saints had tried to answer in their discourses and similes during the long evenings of the rainy season: What is the meaning of this life, where does our way take us, what is the aim of our existence?

In that country religion was everything, the mystery of eternity dominated every form of life. But there were no really compelling and fundamental teachings. The

farmers who ploughed their fields, worshipped innumerable Gods alongside Shiva, the three-eyed God who is enthroned up in the Himalayas and brings destruction or prosperity upon mankind, or Kali, his thousand-armed wife, or the wise God with the elephant head. The Brahmins in the small wooden temples on the hills believed in Brahma as the world's soul Brahma and in a cycle of Gods surrounding Brahma. They spoke in ancient Sanskrit and knew all the verses of the Vedas.

Siddhartha, too, had been introduced to the three stages of Vedic teachings by his educators: Mantra, which means worship, Brahmana, which stands for theology, and Sutra, which means guidance.

He closed his eyes in order to immerse himself into the world of this faith: maybe Brahma, the world's soul, is the aim, and attaining it is the way to salvation. A thousand times the divine powers of Brahma climb up and down a thousand steps to the universe, depending on one's merits, accomplishments and pureness, or sin, bonds or guilt.

The boy Siddhartha still huddled under the elephant tree. He saw the pulsating life surrounding him in a different light, the abundance of the plants, the radiation and breathing of the earth and sky, the humming of the bees and the heavy pace of the zebu oxen drawing the plough. All this is a mysterious accord of many voices. One must strive for Brahma – the only and spiritual – must gradually liberate oneself from everything material and mortal in order to gain peace and security in one's heart.

In a low voice the lips of the boy formed the words from the Vedic books:

„The body is not permanent, riches do not last forever, and death is always imminent, so why do we gather merits? Man only becomes invincible, loveable, mild, generous, affluent, and glorious through security in life. But unclouded joy does not exist in the world and never will exist.“

No – security in life does not exist anywhere in this world. Death, pain, lament and fugacity are always imminent. As if in a vision the boy saw the fate of human life: a huge wheel to which all creatures are tied, a wheel which keeps turning without mercy, up and down and up again, in an endless – and as it seemed to him – meaningless motion. There is no way out. Brahma is unreachably far away.

In the evening Siddhartha related a parable to the courtiers who listened to him:

„As the flame only continues burning when nourished with new fuel, a creature only exists as long as it nourishes its will to live by clinging to the world and its pleasures. Existence is like a flame that burns in the second or third night watch. Its fuel is different from the flame nourished in the first night watch, but still it is a continuation of the same flame. How else could fire be sated if not by extinguishing it? How else should redeeming darkness finally come if not by no longer nourishing the flame and letting it die?“

The pain which had overcome the boy Siddhartha for the first time in the middle of spring when life around him had reawakened, returned again, became

more conscious, more tormenting. His boyish fears of the ancient Vedic Gods had disappeared. No longer did he believe in the existence of Brahma's five worldly guards: Indra, Varuna, Yama, Soma and Vishnu. No longer did he believe in the four heavenly winds, the sun, the moon and stars.

Siddhartha sought profoundness, the ultimate element which has to be concealed somewhere behind the image of the Gods. Although he had risen above the faith of the peasants and shepherds, he did not detest their beliefs – India is patient.

It was spring again, the Sakyas cultivated their fields and walked out to the groves of Kapilavatthu. The Pariahs worked in the rice fields; the oxen ploughed the furrows to the sound of whips and the tinkle of small bells. Siddhartha, the prince, sat alone under a rose apple tree, at some distance from the singing and chatting young people. Stared fixatedly straight ahead – he had begun to discipline his mind with the art of yoga, the ascetic exercises for self-realisation – he controlled his breath and sank into solitude.

Pious penitents had told him about the twenty-four Jaina ascetics – the conquerors of the world – and about Vardhamana, the great hero, who had found the way out of all duality. Vardhamana was only slightly older than Siddhartha. He had been born in Videna, in the north-eastern Himalayas, offspring of a noble family of warrior-kings. At the age of twenty-eight he renounced his riches, his princely rule and all his happiness. Within only twelve years he turned himself into a pure ascetic and founded a monastic order. Followed by his disciples, the omniscient ascetic now wandered through the country at the foot of the mountains.

Siddhartha had learned the art of yoga from one of his emissaries – that means exertion and control of the body and its instincts.

The white-robed monks of Vardhamana teach of the transmigration of souls. Release, the end of reincarnation, can only be achieved when the soul has consumed everything fateful and everything binding the person to earthly life: only then – when released from its weight – is it possible for the soul to ascend to the highest summits of the world.

There was silence around Siddhartha, the sun no longer shone for him, the Earth lay deep beneath him, and his soul dwelt in the endless solitude of the summits. But then he returned to reality, he found himself captivated in a body which was subject to all the pain of the world. His transfiguration was only a dream, an illusion, the restlessness in his heart had remained.

As the son of a king he was married at a young age. His young wife bore him a son, Rahula. Years of futile pondering about insoluble problems passed by. Siddhartha was now twenty-nine years old. Many people envied his riches, the wonderful heritage of his marvelous palace, the forests and fertile fields of his kingdom, the numerous Dravidian slaves he owned, his beautiful wife and his nice son.

But to him all his property and even the love to his relatives seem to be bonds that tied him fast to the eternally turning wheel of existence.

Do children really mean joy, Siddhartha asked himself. Can our wishes protect them from disease, death or disappointment? What is property? A chain that ties our soul, ties it to the earthly. Nothing can really be owned. The shadow of transience falls over everything.

Buddha as a Monk

After long internal battles, the twenty-nine year old prince decided to leave everything behind that he owned – his wife and son, riches, power and realm – and to search for the ultimate truth and the meaning of life.

First he decided to go to the holy town of Benares where numerous wise men, scholars, pandits, ascetics, artists and musicians lived.

The atmosphere there was extraordinarily intellectual. There were a number of masters and teachers who were prepared to pass on their knowledge. Siddhartha met a famous pandit, a legal scholar, who, without hesitating, taught him religious dogmas and doctrines.

As an extraordinarily gifted student Siddhartha quickly comprehended the main principles of the doctrines and soon proved able to take part in discourse with the most learned. He gave speeches and joined in discussions with other pandits in the shade of parasols placed on the banks of the river Ganges.

His own way, however, was different. His needs could not be satisfied by learnedness. Endlessly long disputes about the inconsistency of the teachings tired him.

Siddhartha became aware that this scholastic method was not leading him anywhere except to temporary intellectual satisfaction. But it certainly did not guide him towards the truth of existence. While studying the holy texts he did not find any answers to his painful questions about the meaning of human existence.

Therefore Siddhartha gave up the discursive, logical thought that might increase one's personal fame, but did not enhance insight.

Having left his first master he wandered into the forests and joined the yogis, the ascetics and hermits. For some time Siddhartha joined an old man who wanted to teach him painlessness by making pain into a habit. So they inflicted pain upon themselves, they slept on beds of nails, cut themselves, deprived their bodies of food, drink and sleep to elevate their minds above the material.

But the universe kept silent, the Gods concealed themselves. All the self-torturing did not lead the way out of darkness.

Then the son of the Sakya king found another teacher, an ascetic who had enormous willpower and wanted to tame the body through magic and manipulation of his will. He wanted to free the soul from the bonds of the earth.

For a long time Siddhartha remained in a desperately rigid position which was meant to liberate his mind from the wheel of existence.

But eternity kept silent, the method of the ascetic only brought on stupefaction but certainly no freedom. Finally Siddhartha wandered on alone, without any companions. He was a tall, thin monk with a shaven head who carried a beggar's plate and lived on the alms of benevolent, pious people. After a long pilgrimage he reached the river Naranjara in the kingdom of Magadha, and he settled down near the citadel of Uruvela.

„And there I saw a beautiful stretch of land, a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a pleasant ford, and a village for support close by. So I said to myself: Beautiful is this land, a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a pleasant ford, and a village for support close by. This is good for the striving of a noble youth who desires to strive. So I sat down there and thought to myself: this is the right path for my efforts.”

And so he sat beneath a huge pipal tree and meditated about life and death.

„Birth and rebirth are laws of nature – so I have to overcome them. Aging seems to be a law of nature too, so I have to overcome aging as well. And disease seems to be given by nature, too. So I have to overcome disease. And death, too, is a law of nature – so I have to gain immortality. Pain is a natural law – so I have to overcome pain. And all that is impure is part of nature too – so I have to overcome the impure.”

Once again he tried to violently subjugate his own body, he fought against his body in order to suppress his desires and passions.

„I will grit my teeth, I will press my tongue to the palate and with my mind I want to suppress, oppress, force down my thoughts.”

He forbade himself any kind of movement and reduced his breath, nutrition and the movements of his body to a minimum. His self-torture lasted days, even weeks.

The news about the holy penitent who was sitting under the pipal tree of Uruvela spread fast. Reverent locals took up position on the far side of the grove, and five ascetics sat down near to Siddhartha to join in his penitential exercises, his torment and his efforts. But everything was in vain. The body cannot be tamed by exerting external power, the gate remains closed. The method of asceticism is wrong. Only a strong body can achieve the aim. So Siddhartha changed his mind and started eating again. A vision reflecting the old youth days returned to his mind – when as a boy he sat underneath the rose apple tree in front of the gates of Kapilavatthu and practised his gentle, spiritual yoga meditation, when the feeling had overcome him to be one with everything – the mountains, the earth and the grove, and when for the first time he had an inner vision.

The five ascetics abandoned him. They considered him an apostate. There no longer seemed to be anything wonderful or ascetic about him. A monk who eats and breathes, a man who looks up to the sky with a smile, is no longer a saint. The place became more and more deserted, the peasants returned to their

villages. Siddhartha alone remains huddled under the huge roof of foliage of the pipal tree. In calm, reposeful days and nights his refined spirit wanders through the mysteries of the four stages of meditation:

He whose suffering comes to an end
Already here on Earth,
Is free of burden,
And liberated from all bonds.

He who suppresses all wishes,
Who realizes his path and his wrong path,
Becomes wise
And inclined to the supreme.

He who is and stays alienated
From the world and his brothers,
Finds peace,
And needs neither home nor house.

He who shies back from weapons and war
And quarrelling and killing
And loves the beasts,
And loves the plants...
Can be a priest.

Buddha's Enlightenment

In blessed clarity he realizes the correlations of existence: right from the day of our birth desires and wishes awaken and the suffering starts when these wishes and desires are not satisfied.

„By observing and realizing, my soul was saved from the corruption of lust, and my soul was saved from the corruption of growth, and my soul was saved from the corruption of ignorance...

I have attained knowledge:

I am redeemed. Destroyed is the cycle of birth and rebirth, complete the holy change, consumed the duty. There is no return to this world..."

But this isolation was only the first stage of meditation. In this stage he broke away from entanglements and suffering. For the first time he felt the pure sensation of innermost tranquility. Joy and satisfaction flowed through his body. Then he cut the five bonds of the heart in the second stage of meditation: The heart has to liberate itself from all desires of wanting, feeling, seeing and eating, yes even in striving for inner composure. Not to want anything, not to desire anything, not to long for anything – that is freedom.

His purified, transfigured mind delved into the third stage of meditation: for also the divine joy of catharsis is a bond from which he had to liberate himself.

Now pain and pleasure, joy and satisfaction have left the saint. His sense of pleasure and pain was drowned in a feeling of painless and joyless inner tranquility. Equanimity and vigilance completely filled the enlightened one; nothing tied or bound his pure spirit.

In the radiant light of his soul he finally saw the long series of his earlier forms of existence and the chain of suffering which is prolonged by every rebirth. His mind realized that the entire universe is filled with this suffering which fatally results from humans' burning lust for life. But he had defeated the lust for life and had thus defeated death. He entered the soft, gentle fields of Nirvana. The seedling for any further rebirths was destroyed, the chain of life had come to an end.

Forever have I found salvation,
That is the last of my lives,
And there is no more rebirth...
Opened are the doors to eternity:
Who has ears to listen, come and listen...

This was the bliss of the fourth stage of meditation. Siddhartha, the Sakya son, had become Buddha, the Enlightened One. His being had become radiant, comparable to the bright sun. The wheel of existence passed him by far away.

„Blessed is the solitude of the joyful one who realizes and sees truth. Blessed is he who is able to bridle himself and never does harm to anybody! To be blessed means to totally overcome passion and all desires! Blessed is he who is able to repress the pride of his defiant self!“

The face of the Enlightened One was radiant. Power and security exuded from him...

Was there anything else to do?

The dark roof of foliage of the pipal tree spanned over the head of the enlightened one. Like a window to Nirvana some blue spots of the sky could be seen between the leaves; far away – like the flowing water – a restless life roared, bugs rustled, grass and trees waved in the wind, people lived...

Yes – there was still another thought which reached out to Buddha like a shadow: people, brothers and sisters, still live under the yoke of fate. Should the secret of salvation that he had gained for himself be divulged to the world? Would those surrounded by darkness, those blind with passion, understand him? Would contact with the world, going out to the people, not once again cast a shadow over the inner radiance of his soul? Would it not be exhaustion and pain again?

Buddha's Wandering Years

For a long time the sublime one pondered, meditating underneath the tree at Uruvela. Then the enormous kindness that flowed to him from his newly gained freedom won over, and he decided to communicate his knowledge and to preach to the unredeemed the joy of salvation.

The thirty-six year old thought of the five monks who had once stayed with him here at Uruvela and who had considered him an apostate. Where may they be now?

And with his divine, refined eyes which saw far beyond human limits, he saw the monks near Benares, at the seer's stone in the deer park...

Gautama Buddha headed for Benares, the great city on the holy river Ganges. He searched for the people...

Benares had for a long time been the most sacred place of pilgrimage of all Indian peoples. Located in the heart of India right on the river Ganges, the city with its palaces, temples and tombs extended down to the river banks in several terraces. Broad steps led down to the majestic river which, like a yellow-gray glittering ribbon, flowed past the city. On the hills there were the wooden palaces of the princes which were artfully painted and decorated with the finest wood carvings; splendid temples for the ancient Gods Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma rested under gilded roofs; huge crowds of people moved down the stone-clad steps which led to the purifying river.

Upako, a naked penitent, standing a little aside from the bustle of the crowds, spoke to Ananda, a noble youth who sought enlightenment. „My spirit has been hurt by the cruelty of life. See there, Ananda, how frenzy, pain and worry dwell among the crowds, see the beaten thief beside the pride of the prince, see the fortunes accumulated by the merchants next to the bitter poverty of the Sansis. Hunger, greed, fear and hopelessness dominate the masses.“

Ananda was one of the many men who had left their families, heritage and land behind, yes even the sign of their caste, and tried to find the gateway leading to eternity. Neither with the priests of the cults, however, nor with the penitents and ascetics has he found enlightenment.

Suddenly, amidst the crowd, an unknown monk with a shaven head and a long beard appeared. He wore a yellow garment, and radiance flowed from him so that the crowds parted to let him pass, and the noises of the streets ceased. Gautama Buddha walked through the streets of Benares.

Driven by some inner compulsion, Upako and Ananda followed the saint. At the Dasamedh Stairs they caught up with him, and Upako said to the Enlightened One:

„Serene, oh brother, is your face, bright is your complexion and pure! For whose sake, oh brother, have you gone out into the world? Who is your master? In whose teaching do you believe?“

The Enlightened One smiled and answered:

„It is in myself that the light of sacred knowledge shines. Enlightenment has come over me, for me there will be no further rebirth, my friends. Since I have won true knowledge and understanding, an understanding of the world of the Gods, of Brahma, the highest wisdom of all beings, I am happy.”

The two seekers of truth, Upako and Ananda, bowed down in front of the Enlightened One and his knowledge. They listened to Buddha's sermons of self-realisation, and from then on they followed him wherever he went. They had found their master – the master had found his first disciples. Others joined them – a selection of the brightest men and youths. Twelve of them became his steady companions, and Ananda became his favorite disciple.

Years of teaching and wandering through the beautiful country passed by. Princes and statesmen, scholars and kings met the Enlightened One. He opened the door to Nirvana for everyone, the gate to salvation from the torture of becoming and changing; he spoke to the Pariahs and the powerful of this world alike, because for him all beings were equal – they were all chained to the wheel of rebirth. Everyone that approached the Enlightened One received his gentleness and kindness. They called him the »shepherd« - »he who walks out to fetch home erring lambs«.

The misfortunate and outcasts threw themselves at his feet; they were released. Criminals repented in the face of his enormous kindness and suppressed their passions. Only a core group of his disciples and monks, however, surrendered to total self-contemplation. And only a few of them actually took the four vows of the order:

- A perfect monk must not be unclean.
- A perfect monk must not take anything in thievish intention that he is offered, not even a leaf of grass.
- A perfect monk must not knowingly deprive any living being of its life, not even a worm or an ant.
- A perfect monk must not pride himself upon his superhuman perfection.

The path which the Enlightened One showed to his monks demanded two deeds: The first one is to walk out to the world – to leave home and family, cut any kind of bonds to earthly life. He demanded poverty, wandering and detachment from any external ties.

The second task was to find oneself, the procedure of self-realisation that Buddha experienced under the tree in Uruvela. But this ultimate aspect is dependent upon grace and a silent, lonesome height which everyone has to gain for himself.

There was no constraint, no rigid organization among Buddha's monks. The new way was not a religion in the traditional sense, but an opportunity which one may seize or not. Therefore the Enlightened One also rejected the eagerness of some younger disciples who wanted to establish set rules or regulations. Redemption means calmly pacing forward on the middle path – no self-torture through scruples or exaggerated asceticism.

Sometimes the Enlightened One stayed with rich merchants or at some prince's court; but mostly he preferred to stay at calm, beautiful places which reminded him of the woodlands in his home country. And he often taught in the »Stony Hermitage« or the »Forest of the Conqueror Anathapindika.«

He lived according to his teachings to set an example for his monks. With an enraptured smile on his face he wandered through the villages with their mud huts and reed roofs. He was very careful not to step on any bug in the dust of the road, he saved bees that had fallen into ponds, and he chose his steps in such a way so as not to break any flower.

For forty years Buddha wandered as a teacher amidst the people. His teachings spread everywhere in Northern India.

Then when the monsoon rains poured down from the sky, the Enlightened One fell seriously ill. Once again his will was able to subdue his decline, and he suppressed the weakness of his body, but he knew that the hour was near that would lead him to the eternal spheres. Fear overcame his disciples; Ananda lamenting turned to his master.

"Are you to pass away from us, won't you speak to your community once again?"

"I have spoken my whole life long, Ananda. What had to be said was said. Now I have nothing more to say."

Tired, he closed his eyes, and for a moment he sank into deep reflection. But then he raised his voice once again, and his face was radiant with transfiguration.

"Like a mother protects her child, her only child, with her life, you shall create immeasurable love towards all beings. You shall create immeasurable love towards the whole world, towards the world above and the world beneath you, in all directions – unlimited shall your love be and without hostility or enmity. But you shall not bind yourself in love to one single being.

You shall learn this love: the redemption of your heart...

By not growing angry one can overcome anger; evil can be overcome by doing good; greed can be overcome by giving; and liars can be overcome by the truth! Those who inflict pain on me and those who give me joy – I am the same to all of them; I know neither sympathy nor displeasure, joy and pain, honour and dishonour are balanced out in me; I do not distinguish between them. This is the completion of my equanimity...

And one shall not kill, not a single being shall you kill, nor shall you condone anybody else's killing any other being; but you shall refrain from doing harm to any being regardless of whether it is strong or weak and shivers out of fear of the world..."

Once again the Enlightened One was silent for a long time, then he turned to Ananda and added:

„I am an old man, Ananda, my way lies behind me. I am eighty years old now and like a fragile cart badly fixed with cords. My monks, remember that you are your own light, you need no new leaders – everyone shall be his own master. Nobody should try to play the leader.”

Part II

Everything is Spirit

In the second part of my work I would like to discuss the nature and functions of the spirit. I want to show that everything in the universe is *spirit*: atoms, radiation, minerals as well as single-celled and multi-cellular organisms.

When you look around you will perceive your environment as colorful and spatial. The world around you seems real and concrete because you can touch things and can change them. When a heavy object falls onto your foot, it hurts and your foot may be bruised. When you are hungry you will definitely try to find something to eat.

This is one side of the world, which seems so real and so concrete.

But then you switch on the television. On the screen you see worlds with landscapes, people, animals and plants; you may roar with laughter or shut your eyes in fear, although what you see on the screen are just electro-magnetic waves of a specific wavelength which are received by the television set and translated into moving pictures.

When you lie down in your bed in the evening and wearily close your eyes to forget about the world around you, very often you will experience how you find yourself in a known or even unknown environment, how you move in your body, how visions are created, how you react to these images of your new world, how they make you feel good or how they frighten you. It does not even cross your mind that you are living in a world of illusions. And sometimes when you experience something beautiful or impressive in your dreams, you really regret being torn away again from this world and thrown back into an allegedly more real world.

That is the other side of the world, which gives us a small impression of how relative reality can be.

Despite our increasing but yet modest knowledge about our world and the universe, we have to admit that what seems so real to us is not actually what we assume at first. When I claim that there are no colors, I'm not actually telling you anything new, because for quite some time colors have been known as mere perceptions of our sensory organs which are due to light and a combination of various electro-magnetic waves. So whether colors appear as red, green, blue and yellow or one of the many mixed colors depends on how objects absorb or reflect light. Furthermore, it is well known that not all beings perceive the world homogeneously as colorful. So the sensation of colors in our environment depends on the sensory organs and the mental processes of a living being.

Since Einstein we have known that even time can be relative. Furthermore it is also well known that for older people time does not pass as quickly as for younger ones.

When you have to transport a sack that weighs 50kg you will feel the urgent wish to put it down as soon as possible. But the same sack would seem much lighter to an astronaut on the Moon, because gravity is much weaker on the Moon than it is on the Earth. The bodies of this world have their specific shapes and sizes because the world is as it is. When these bodies are accelerated, they undergo an increase in mass; when reaching the velocity of light, they would reach an infinite mass. So bodies and their shapes and weights are relative too.

You undoubtedly know that the universe once – maybe more than fifteen billion years ago – is supposed to have *developed out of one single infinitesimally small point*. The unimaginable amount of energy out of which later billions of galaxies were formed, is said to have been accommodated in this spatial pipsqueak. The assumption that the universe developed out of one single point is based on the observation that the universe is continuously expanding. If it is expanding, the conclusion that it once originated from a tiny point is logical.

I do not consider this conclusion of the physicists to be wrong, because it is based on logical considerations and mathematical calculations. I only consider the theory quite absurd that the enormous mass of energy involved in the process could have been generated by one single tiny point.

But if you assume that everything is spirit and spirit is colorless, spaceless and timeless, then it is much easier to give plausible explanations. The problem however is that the concept of »spirit« does not really mean very much to many people **although they are mentally and spiritually active all the time and continuously experience how their own mind and spirit creates illusions and becomes active through their own will**. But we have to understand our own spirit first to understand another spirit too.

One day I had the idea that space as we perceive it – just as in the case of colors – is »only« a perception and in reality does not exist independently. We have seen how easy it is to create images (and with these images spatial representations!), for example when using television sets, and to dissolve these images again.

I would like to remind the reader that mass (matter) and energy form the basis of the universe. Einstein discovered that mass and energy are only two different forms of the same thing. According to his famous formula $E = mc^2$ (energy = mass x the square of the velocity of light) mass can be translated into an enormous quantity of energy. On the other hand, just as much energy is necessary to »produce« mass.

Since Einstein it has been assumed that everything – the complete universe – is energy, energy that was partly transformed into mass during the evolution of the universe.

But what is energy?

Several various forms of energy are discussed in scientific works: *nuclear energy*, which is the newest and most dangerous of all forms of energy known to man because it can release enormous amounts of power; the well-known and highly beneficial *electrical energy*, which is used to power our television sets and

radios; *chemical energy*, which animates our body and which generates warmth from wood, coal, oil or gas; *radiation energy* (light) and *gravitation*, which is the cause of potential energy.

Today's scientific knowledge often terminates in the idea that energy is the basis of the universe, which developed out of a tiny point after the big bang.

But everything looks quite different when spirit is assumed as the basis of everything that exists and when we come to understand the functions of the spirit. *According to my understanding spirit is spaceless, timeless, shapeless and colorless. It is active through its inherent will and is capable of understanding and of expressing itself and its illusions in mental images.*

It is relatively easy to understand the function of the spirit when you consider your own mental activities and those of other people.

Just imagine you want to build a house.

First you need to *develop an idea* about what your home should be like. Creatures that do not have any concept about buildings are not able to plan or build a house. Beings such as bees, rabbits or mice have totally different concepts about dwellings. While the human concept includes walls, bricks, concrete and iron, rabbits and mice may find holes in the ground an excellent habitation.

The (mental) concept of a roof over one's head is one thing, building a house is another. You will be most unlikely to spend your time toiling to move earth, carry bricks or push wheelbarrows if you do not feel an urgent desire to have a house for yourself. Your mind will certainly not sense the wish or even the necessity to plan a house, to raise the necessary funds and to toil evening after evening and weekend after weekend.

Therefore your mind must assume the *will* to plan and build a house. As soon as there is a will, it will constantly motivate you until the construction of the house is completed. The will uses all the *means* available, which it then shapes and forms.

From 1940 onwards a formerly unknown type of behavior of titmice was observed in England. The birds pecked holes in the tops of the milk bottles which were placed in front of the doors in the morning, and then drank the cream. Within the following few years this behavior spread from single villages to the whole country due to social stimulation among the birds. This new behavior only came to an end when stronger tops for milk bottles came into use.

Beekeepers know that bees search for places abundant with blooming flowers that provide nectar. As soon as a bee finds such a place, it communicates it to the other bees by showing a specific type of behavior. In the next flight the other bees join together to collect the nectar at that specific place.

On a »small hill« we have set up a rabbit warren. The rabbits burrow in the soil and dig deep holes in which they bear their offspring. One day I saw one of the local cats enter the rabbits' nest and apparently carry away the small rabbits.

In the end I couldn't bear to watch this, so I decided to interfere with nature. I took the last remaining young rabbit with me into our house. The small animal was a real pleasure for all of us, especially for the children. I observed that the small rabbit increasingly developed an unexpected type of behavior while living with us humans. I was totally astonished when I found out that this small animal was very fond of sweets, sausages and meat. I experimented with the rabbit and offered the animal a nice variety of foods, and behold - it first picked at the delicacies previously mentioned and left the carrots, lettuce and cabbage untouched.

As a programmer I have always had many ideas, and I am firmly convinced that programs have to be as simple and user-friendly as possible so that anyone can work with them without any problems. So I have a *very specific view* of these things, which is based on my personal experience and skills. When I recently developed a totally new version of a financial accounting program, I tried to make use of all available new technologies and tools, but I often came into conflict with my employees, who had to test the programs. Their view was based on what they were used to, namely on the predecessor versions of the program. I, however, had totally moved away from these versions and programmed in such a way that the program, supported by the newest tools and technologies, would work optimally. Only gradually could I make my employees understand and support the new routines.

I am convinced that the examples described above clearly show that the views of humans and animals differ, but that animals, like humans, perceive their environment, process experiences and draw their conclusions from what they perceive. But the way in which they perceive things is totally different, and it can be taken for granted that there are no two people in the world who perceive exactly the same thing and have exactly the same view of things. For example, a man who stands on a mountain for the first time and looks down to the valleys below, has a broad view of the world below him and thus may think - because he has never been anywhere else - he is looking over the world. Another man who stands on an even higher mountain and may see even farther than the first one, may also think that he is standing on top of the world and overlooking everything although there are still higher mountains that are three, four, seven or even eight thousand meters high.

If we are honest with ourselves we will certainly realize how easily we are deceived. Often in the course of life we believe we have understood things and the way of the world. So many people end up in mental dead ends and think they know everything and even know better than others. They are full of prejudices and cannot imagine that the world could be different from their own view of it. Frank people, however, admit that their view is limited due to their own spirit and the conditions of their environment.

Even people who are very learned and whose mind is open to everything actually have a very limited view. It reaches its limits first of all at the physical boundaries of our small Earth that moves around one of the billions of stars somewhere in the huge galaxy called the Milky Way, a galaxy which other creatures that may exist elsewhere in the universe most probably have not yet even noticed.

With some imagination it is not too difficult to put oneself into the situation of an animal and to imagine how, for example, a small rabbit feels, what desires, miseries and fears it has, how it is born blind, searches for the warmth of the nest and its mother's protection, and maybe after a fortnight it leaves the protecting nest for the first time in order to discover the world...

It is a beautiful day. Schnuffl, a small rabbit with long black and white ears, sees the green grass surrounding the cave for the first time. Instinctively it smells the grass, takes a mouthful of it and – behold! – it tastes good. Its innate natural fear of the new and unknown, however, soon makes the small rabbit return to its secure nest. But Schnuffl soon leaves the nest again, this time together with some of his siblings.

Suddenly the older rabbits return to the nest as fast as they can. They already know about the dangers of this world, have already learned that there are certain animals to be feared. So they always listen carefully, and the whole day they are cautious wherever they go and are beware of everyone, above all of those creatures that walk on two legs and address them with a sweet and soft voice, but then catch and carry away some of the other rabbits – and nobody knows where they take them.

Schnuffl soon finds out that among the beings walking on two legs there is a very small one who always brings him fine food, delicious, somewhat bitter tasting grasses and some unknown hard but delicious thing. So Schnuffl always listens carefully when he hears the noise »Maria«, for then this caring creature is usually somewhere near, brings him something nice to eat or is nice to him, although sometimes she touches him a bit roughly.

So the days pass and Schnuffl grows older and becomes bigger. He experiences how it turns dark and light, cold and warm and how sometimes he has more and sometimes less to eat. Many of his siblings, one after the other, have disappeared. Often he looks through the mesh of the fence that surrounds his habitation and on which he has often nibbled in vain. How much he would like to go out there and see the big world! He remembers the day when Maria took him with her and released him on a huge meadow with delicious grasses. How nice it was to run around freely and see and discover so many new things! If he could only finish that hole he had started digging under the fence. But every time when he had dug for hours and hours with his small paws, one of the big creatures walking on two legs came and covered the hole with earth, and last time it even covered it up with some very hard material, so that poor Schnuffl had to give up his plans and had to search for a new place to dig a hole...

I do not want to continue this story, because too often such stories end sadly. I just wanted to raise some feelings about how other creatures that are not called humans have wishes, hopes and fears too and experience life in their own way.

It is not just »instincts« that motivate animals, but their own spirit according to which they develop illusions and wishes and try to fulfil them. Bees learn how to build honeycombs and, similarly to humans, they hand down their knowledge to their offspring. Rabbits, when living with humans, learn and adopt habits from the humans, and humans often learn from the reasonable and logical behavior of the animals.

I take it for granted that there is no basic difference between animals and humans. They all live according to their mental activities, and it does not really matter whether they have a comprehensive or more limited view of the world.

When you study atoms you will be fascinated and stunned about how they work. In an atom there are a certain number of electrons that move in specific orbits around the nucleus. They can be charged or discharged etc. It is even more astonishing how they have been moving for millions of years without wearing down or consuming energy. They just move on, and it is totally natural, so natural that people assume that it simply has to be like that.

As a programmer I have noticed with fascination how much can be done and created with allegedly »lifeless matter«. I can see how my ideas – mental and pictorial ideas – are able to influence this »matter«.

If I write a simple command like »PRINT 5 * 20«, the machine executes this command immediately. Within a split second this command is interpreted by the basic programs and transmitted through a binary code to the processor, the »boss« of the computer, which then runs a series of processes until the result 100 is displayed on the monitor. In these processes many electrons are transmitted in one or another direction, switches are operated, results are saved on the clipboard, compared and so on.

If, for example many partial polling results are used in order to estimate the election outcome, many processes go on in the computers. Endlessly long programs – the ideas of programmers! – are loaded and stored on huge computers and retrieved and used according to the specific needs. To save, for example, the polling results of communities or districts, the ideas of programmers which have been formed into programs are opened. These programs give step-by-step commands governing which masks are displayed on the monitor and which input fields appear. Nothing happens coincidentally, everything follows a clear scheme. Even the smallest dot must be configured correctly, and every input error made by a user must be recognized and rejected immediately. In an incredibly short time an enormous amount of data, partial and final results are transmitted, instructions are implemented, saved and displayed on the monitors.

But what exactly happens during all these processes?

Every programmer knows that programming means above all developing ideas and writing these ideas into the computer. Without any ideas no programs can be written and computers cannot be »called to life«. So the programmers' ideas are written down, tested for logical correctness and finally saved on various computers for repeated use.

Computers, too, are just the outcome of human concepts and their implementation. All the technological developments, whether we welcome them or not, are based on human wishes and ideas.

But how can a computer understand what the programmer and later the user really wants?

Tell another person to fetch you a glass of water. If this person understands your language and is able to sense sound waves, he will know what you want. The concept is: take a glass, fill it with water, and bring it to your fellow human being. As many concepts are processed automatically in us, you just need to have the will to get up in order to fulfill the other person's wish. However, if this person does not have the will, he will ignore what he has heard.

He may simply pretend not to have heard or say, »Go and get your water yourself!« Then the thirsty person has to get up himself, may make an angry remark and get himself a glass of water.

A computer is not able to reject wishes (unless the program includes a function to do so). On the »lowest«, »material« level one command has to be followed by another command. As long as no new command is entered, the former one remains valid. A robot which is set into motion will continue moving until it receives a new command saying, »stop« or »change movement«.

Everywhere we see how the world works: first someone has an idea about what has to be done. If the idea is followed by the will to implement this idea, implementation can actually begin. Step by step – often in millions of tiny steps – we strive to reach our aim until we finally attain it.

Think about prehistoric times, when people wandered around in the country as nomads. They searched for food, built tents or dwelled in some cave or on a tree – who knows exactly? They lived in small groups and exchanged information on where to pick delicious fruits or hunt good animals. Today we live in a network bound by enormous interdependencies in which the most important thing is to successfully specialize and, as a specialist, make one's contribution to society. We just need to find out what is demanded by society and can already start producing and making business.

Regardless of whether it is man, a dog or a cat, a being always has to *know* first in order to react. We need to have an idea about what is demanded or what has to be done. If a dog's master or mistress is angry, it is better for the dog to hide under the table; if our boss is in a bad mood, it is advisable to keep out of his way.

It is said that animals are guided only by their »instincts«. This does not at all correspond to my observations, apart from certain basic needs that animals and humans alike have to fulfill. But humans are subject to such basic needs as hunger, sexuality, thirst or warmth exactly as animals are. Animals can actually understand their environment and live according to their understanding.

But if the mind of humans, animals and even tiny single-celled organisms is able to understand, to develop concepts and ideas and act according to its will, then another consideration is more than logical, namely that even the spirit that forms atoms, electrons or light waves follows exactly *the same principles*. And it actually cannot be any other way: spirit is always spirit, regardless of what form it manifests itself in.

Many people have reservations when it comes to accepting the idea that other, lower beings have a spirit. Therefore I want to analyze these aspects in greater detail. I would like to discuss the example of a single-celled organism in

order to demonstrate that there is only a *relative difference* between the body of a human and the body of a single-celled organism.

According to current knowledge the *cell* is the smallest unit of life. More complex structures such as tissues and organs, plants, animals or humans are made of millions, even billions of cells.

The cell is able to perform all vital functions, that is metabolism, growth, movement, reproduction and heredity. Cells are able to exchange energy, substances and information with their environment and are characterized by the highest possible degree of order.

Cells merit our special interest because:

- All organisms are composed of cells – single-celled organisms consist of only one single cell, multi-cellular organisms are composed of many billions of different cells;
- In their individual development, multi-cellular organisms mostly pass through a single-cell stage, which is usually represented by the fertilized egg;
- Cells can only evolve out of cells, either by division or – as in case of fertilization – by fusion.

The cell as an organism is a very complex system of components. Some of these components are visible under the light microscope, others, even smaller ones are only visible under the electron microscope. Cell structures that are visible under the light microscope are, for example, cell walls and cell cavities, the cell nucleus, which contains genetic information, the mitochondria, which are necessary for producing energy and the plastids, which are able to create starch. Organelles such as the ribosomes, which are responsible for protein synthesis, and the golgi apparatus – these are vesicles which have secretory functions – are only visible under the electron microscope. Cells, similarly to the human body, consist of various organs so that it can be said that cells are the smallest living organisms whose composition and function is similar to that of multi-cellular organisms.

A cell consists of electrons, ions, atoms and water molecules, as well as complex bio-molecules such as nucleic acids and proteins. Proteins are the most important components of an organism. Proteins have short or long chains of amino acids. Many people know the protein fibrin, which enables blood clotting. Also well known are enzymes which function as catalysts and enhance chemical reactions and, when hosted in a favorable substrate, can turn over a million times their own mass within a minute.

Amino acids are molecular compounds of hydrogen, carbon, oxygen and sodium atoms. For example, the amino acid glycine consists of a compound formed by five hydrogen, one sodium, two carbon and two oxygen atoms.

Nucleic acids carry genetic information. In huge molecules, the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acids), genetic information is stored: the information that creates an enormous variety of organisms through specific development and replication of cells.

The life of a cell is manifold regardless of whether it is only a single-celled organism or it is specialized and active within an entire set of cells. As in the human body, numerous processes take place at any single moment, processes which are of vital importance for the life of the cell – and if these are part of an entire complex of cells – for the entire organism. Continuously more or less complex molecules must be produced, energy and substances must be exchanged with the environment, defects must be repaired, any arising difficulties must be solved and information must be exchanged within the cell system and with neighboring cells of a cell complex. The main difference between the processes in the body of a human and in a single cell is size, but in principle these processes have the same purpose, namely that a guiding energy controls processes, procures information and transmits it.

In the same way that the human mind reacts to the needs of the environment and increasingly gives up its independence in favor of specialization, cells react to information in the cell complex and carry out the activities demanded. Humans become engineers, doctors, biologists, carpenters or programmers, and through their specialization they restrict themselves so much to a specific field that they are no longer able to exist on their own. So it does not take long until vital information is forgotten and new information that is necessary for specialization is acquired.

From this short discourse we have seen that even »small« organisms such as cells (but what does »small« really mean?) are able to realize and to react to what they realize. Without this ability life would not be possible, because life means activity that is subject to a natural order and has to be fine-tuned with other organisms.

Based on the example of a computer I have already shown how a fascinating number of processes take place which are controlled by the processor which in turn receives its information from people via programs. Nowadays everyone should understand that ideas in the form of programs can operate even in so-called »soulless things«. Without human ideas, without the will of the humans, such devices could neither exist nor work.

An important aspect of the matter and energy level is that ideas are presented in such a way that they are actually *understood*. It is useless to sit in front of a computer or robot and talk to these machines, as it is useless to recite Schiller's poems to a cow.

We humans also only understand what we perceive through our sensory organs. Other signals – such as radio waves – remain hidden to us while they can be sensed by a radio receiver that has the necessary sensors. Most people are obviously not susceptible for spiritual messages because they do not have the necessary sensors. But could this not change dramatically in a future, more spiritual age?

When transmitting information it is crucial to use a suitable way for it to be able to reach the receiver.

Humans can gain an idea of their environment and its possibilities and needs. Developments in the past few decades have led to a dramatic adaptation of

human beings to new conditions and opportunities. In this process understanding new needs and possibilities has been of utmost importance.

Similarly - and this has been repeatedly confirmed by behavioral scientists - animals and plants adapt to new conditions in their environment. They understand their new habitat and adapt to the new conditions.

The idea that atoms, molecules and elementary particles are »lifeless« seems rather implausible to me. They all carry out activities, and *to be active means to live*. Maybe, no probably, we will realize some day how galaxies are interrelated with each other and that the complete universe is comparable to a huge body. Maybe these processes will one day be repeated »bottom-up«. What is going on in a cell also happens in a comparable way in the body of an organism. And what is going on in the body of an organism could analogously also happen in the huge entity of the universe, in which stars and planets could represent the atomic nuclei and electrons and the Milky Way could represent the cells. But is there spirit behind all these processes?

Our thoughts will come up against barriers again and again, barriers which only the spirit can break through. Nowadays we spend far too much time trying to understand ourselves and life itself. But time will pass, and the world tomorrow will not be the same as it is today.

I am firmly convinced that for a happy and caring coexistence of all creatures a certain basic knowledge is necessary, but that it is meaningless whether and how many other world systems exist and whether these – a concept I deem rather improbable – are created and governed by somebody or not. It is however a matter of fact that through the activities of the entire spirit the universe has been changing day after day in the course of billions and billions of years and will change in the future through mental ideas and concepts of the *entire spirit*. In the millions of years since man has existed, only humans, animals and plants have inhabited the worlds – and it will no doubt remain so.

We have already learned that spirit can only manifest itself, but can never be »shown« in its true nature and thus »proven«. This is precisely the reason why we have so far looked for the spirit within us in vain. We cannot »find« it because it can only do exactly what we constantly experience: express itself in ideas and activities.

Astronomers and physicists have established to their amazement that we - according to present calculations – can only prove the existence of around 4% (!) of the universe and that around 23% of matter is invisible and 73% of energy is not identifiable. This 23% matter is described as 'dark matter' and the 73% energy as 'dark energy'. The existence of 'dark matter' was discovered by, for example, calculating the speed or orbit of stars around the centre of a galaxy and comparing it to the gravity resulting from the mass of all the stars, planets, gas clouds etc. Our solar system thus orbits around the centre of the Milky Way at a speed of 220 km/s or 792,000 km/hour. The sun develops an enormous centrifugal force in this process which has to be compensated for by the force of gravity, otherwise our sun along with its planets would have long since been projected out of the galaxy. There must be a suitably large mass between the sun and the galactic centre in order to develop to the necessary gravitational

force. If one calculates the total visible matter, however, one is amazed to establish that there is far too little of it. Therefore there has to be something else which is holding our solar system in the galaxy.

Dark matter does not betray its own existence in any way. It emits no radiation of any kind known to man. Nevertheless, its mass must be gigantic; it is estimated to be **five or six times larger than the total observed mass of the galaxy**.

If we then have to admit we can only establish the existence of the major part of being through its effect but not its existence in form, size or colour, then it should not be difficult to consider the existence of spirit possible, given that we ourselves are equipped with such spirit and can continuously observe its activity.

Human spirit, which is even capable of realizing truth, needs appropriate means and conditions for developing its innate possibilities. It finds these conditions in the body and the environment. Spirit without a body is lifeless spirit that cannot become aware of its existence.

Maybe there is an unconscious drive inherent in each spirit to seek its own development together with other spirits. This would explain why even the »smallest« spirits have come to form joint existences and begun to form groups of elementary particles and atoms. During the gradual evolution of the world, the basic conditions were laid for the development of a »greater« spirit. Consequently simple »single-celled organisms« evolved and later plants, animals and humans.

I consider a life of spirit alone without a body impossible. If certain reports suggest that life in another world system in the hereafter can exist on a merely spiritual level, then we have to keep in mind that all these reports without exception state that these spiritual beings have a »subtle body« too. However, whether the hereafter really exists as a hereafter, or whether this life actually exists in some other galaxies (it is love's labor's lost to discuss that!) – life can only express itself in activities. To live means to be active, to experience, to reach one's aims and to live happily together with others.

In order to live in this world called Earth the creatures living in it have to adapt to certain atomic and molecular structures. To do so cells use bio-molecular and inorganic substances, especially water and numerous water-soluble substances. Multi-cellular organisms form, depending on their way of reproduction, a multi-cellular body from one cell or from two merged cells.

It is still unclear how spirit actually adapts to bodily substances. There is hardly any literature discussing this subject. According to the work of the English doctor Laurence Bendit and his clairvoyant wife and nurse Phoebe (see chapter »The Bridge of Consciousness«), the zygote (the fertilized ovum which through cell division has already taken the form of a multi-cellular organism) is supposed to be the physical focus for the spirit's embodiment. The authors of the book use many terms taken from far-eastern philosophy with which the reader might not be familiar. So I would like to sum up the findings of the authors in simple words.

Mrs. and Mr. Bendit speak about many layers that lie between the body and the spiritual being, and whose medium layer is the »ethereal« sphere. Clairvoyants can see these ethereal spheres. They say that it seems as if there was a beam of light forming a horizontal circle on the ethereal level and clearly circumscribing this area. In the center of this circle the clairvoyant Mrs. Bendit sees a tiny rotating disc of intense golden light, a kind of mini-sun. While rotating, the golden core emits radiation that influences all layers of the being and makes it move. A complicated pattern of interconnected streams is formed. These streams move at a high speed. The pattern is individual and determined by the nature of the spirit. It gradually assumes the form of a three-dimensional ball.

The fabric of energy thus created hangs more or less over the zygote in the ethereal sphere. Many zygotes die away immediately; but if there is a magnetic connection between the zygote and the round sphere, germination is initiated. The magnetic bond draws together the germ and the sphere surrounding it until the zygote, which most probably is now in the morula or blastula stage, and the rotating field of energies merge.

According to my understanding of space there is no spatial problem any longer in this kind of embodiment. It is conceivable that the beings coming to this Earth actually come from the hereafter or from another world system totally unknown to us, but it is also imaginable that they lived before in worlds of our universe whose vital basis was gradually or suddenly destroyed.

What everyone should think about is that people come to this earth with preformed personalities which are influenced during childhood, but, as every mother and father knows, can hardly be changed. People's mental capacities are certainly determined by the spirit, but not the forces these beings are endowed with and which draw one person in a certain direction and another person in a totally different direction.

It is also unclear how ideas like those of the Bendits are compatible with other forms of reproduction in which development does not start in a cell. What happens for example to a branch which is rammed into the soil and starts growing into a new tree?

Usually the cell is the starting point for the development of a new individual. But the possibility exists that development of a new organism starts from an entire complex of cells. In agriculture and forestry, reproduction by cuttings is widely used. Such cuttings are taken from the mother plant and set roots when placed in humid soil or water. In begonias for example, leaves can regenerate in vine pieces of the stem, and in asteraceas parts of the roots so that they can develop into new plants.

The idea that it is spirit that develops and controls the body is put on a serious test in this form of reproduction. Embodiment of spirit actually seems rather implausible in the case of a cutting. Our problem is that we hardly know anything about the processes involved in embodiment of the spirit. Therefore we can hardly grasp which forces are active in this process, when embodiment really takes place, how tight the link between body and spirit is and under which circumstances this embodiment may also occur in fully developed cell complexes.

We can see in plants, animals and humans how the entire organism is structured in such a way that it is able to adapt appropriately to the environment. With their eyes humans can see, with their ears they can hear, with their hands they can touch, with their feet they can walk and their stomachs serve to digest food which is necessary for generating energy etc. Through the sensory organs the mind can understand its environment and react to it using its bodily tools. Even the beauty of the flowers or of many female beings, as well as the strength of the males living on this Earth originally had the purpose of ensuring reproduction and continued existence of the species.

The bodies of any living being must fit into the environment and be frequently adapted to changing conditions so that the embodiment of spirit in the species in question seems ensured too. In animals and humans alike there is the brain that is capable of perceiving the environment and its conditions. In plants whose sensory organs are not so developed, adaptation of new spirit through certain forces may be sufficient, as is the case with cuttings.

The immediate decay of the body as soon as the spirit passes away from this world seems to be further evidence that it is the spirit that controls the body and makes it useable. Like a car without a driver, a body without a spirit is meaningless. It loses control and becomes immediately prone to forces that make it decline.

As clairvoyants Mrs. and Mr. Bendit observed the complete process of embodiment, birth and the development of the spirit until earthly death. They say that the incoming human individual hovers above the growing body at his own psychic level. "He is not yet consciously linked to it, perhaps not even aware of it. At the quickening, however, it seems that the human individual becomes, perhaps for the first time, attentive to what is taking place in the vehicle he is to inhabit. It is as if the weight of this body were now such that he feels the drag of it, and is compelled to look down, and for the first time to pay attention to it. At this moment, a *new ray* of vital energy flashes into the embryonic field.

At birth the etheric field is almost colorless and uncoordinated, yet the potentiality of both color and organization are there, and can be recognized by the trained percipient. In fact, both the color and the degree of coordination vary from moment to moment, as the attention of the child becomes focused or recedes in diffuse awareness of general conditions. It is as if when interest in something is aroused, and consciousness becomes outward-turned, and focused on the object of interest, the etheric, which has hitherto been somewhat loose and vaguely formed, becomes for the moment more tense and sharply defined, especially round the head. Moreover, its opalescent quality becomes suffused with brighter light and color which, while still faint, show definite tints. When attention is relaxed the etheric returns to its previous state, except that some slight residue is left from the experience which permanently adds to its quality and resilience. These accretions to the fabric of the etheric are indications of progressive mental development – or, more exactly, of the impact of the mind on the etheric field.

As the child becomes increasingly self-conscious there is a progressive but radical change in the etheric aura, especially about the head. It becomes clear and defined in a way the preconscious child is not. It must be added here that certain children seem to be self-conscious from birth, and the same clear definition of

the head aura is then present from earliest times. At this period – usually around seven – the chakras change. At birth they are to be seen as shallow depressions on the surface of the aura, with a thin channel like a stalk running back to the etheric spinal cord. Gradually, however, they deepen, and at the same time come forward beyond the surface of the etheric so that they are like cornucopias or nasturtium flowers growing from the spine, and they develop a fine mesh of etheric energies like a membrane, over the open end. This membrane or web has a special function, in that it filters the impacts from the psychic world and limits what enters physical consciousness.

If serious damage occurs to the etheric, and especially to the chakras, the individual is reduced to the defenceless state he was in as an infant, and loses his adult grip on objective reality. If development is normal and has taken place under good conditions, about the age of seven the child enters into possession of a fully formed, if not fully developed, etheric organism in which all the levels of energy will be functioning basically in the way they will function for the rest of its life."

As I pointed out at the beginning, I have observed such forces in myself for many years, forces and powers which somehow spun. These energies are observed and sensed by many people. In far-eastern philosophy they are widely known as chakras.

Like many other people who have studied this phenomenon I think that these forces are a link between the embodied spirit and the earthly body. I also think that an increasing understanding of these forces can explain much that otherwise might not be explained at all. In his book »Lehrbuch der Neuropsychologie« (»Textbook of Neuropsychology«) *Giselher Guttman*, a professor at the University of Vienna, analyzes the structure and function of nerve cells and perception. He shows how difficult it is to find the exact place and substrate of learning.

About the *place of learning* Guttman writes that for a long time it has been assumed that the cortex of the cerebrum is of crucial importance for every learning process. But he also points out that learning without the cortex of the cerebrum is possible, too. This was shown in numerous animal tests in which conditioning was possible even after complete decortications. He also emphasizes that organisms that have a totally different nervous system and no cerebral cortex can also learn. For more highly developed vertebrates and especially humans, however, an intact cortex seems to be necessary for acquiring behavior adapted to the conditions of the environment. But is there any convincing evidence that the biological basis for learning activities is actually found in this region of the brain? According to Guttman the vast number of lesion experiments comprehensively discussed in older literature does not provide any satisfactory explanation. There is hardly any region in the central nervous system after whose elimination no further changes were observed in acquired behavior.

Various experiments show that the control of learning processes can also depend on other activities, says Guttman. Above all it is highly interesting that not every form of exciting information (stimulus) automatically leads to learning, but that there are other factors which obviously decide about whether this information should be memorized or not.

It was proved in numerous experiments that there is no clearly defined place of learning. It seems as if some extra-cortical region continuously decides in which of the two hemispheres of the brain sensory information should be stored.

As far as *control of learning processes* is concerned, Guttmann writes that at least two totally separated memory systems exist, a *memory* and a *long-term memory*, which differ in numerous functional peculiarities. In the short-term memory new information is obviously stored and maintained for the duration of about ten seconds in an uncoded form. In this phase information is very much prone to disturbances and may disappear without leaving traces if no processes are enacted through specific mechanisms which ensure that this information is consolidated and transferred to the long-term memory. One of the structures responsible for this process is the *hippocampus*, after the failure of which the ability to transfer information from the short-term to the long-term memory is blocked.

It is very difficult to find the *substrate of learning*, that certain something that stores an incredibly large amount of information. As science does not yet take into account the existence of a spirit and still does not know which forces act between the body and the mind, scientists cannot do much more than pose questions. They simply cannot find a proper archive in which information is stored. The brain is a plausible place for switching mechanisms, but as an archive it is not at all satisfactory.

As we have no other choice but to try and find an explanation in the body, it is assumed that stimuli of the central nervous system are not only to be considered as the basis for sensory and effectorial activities, but should also be assumed to be the substrate for learning, says Guttmann. But he asks how a certain set of circumstances with regard to stimulation can be maintained so that even after a long time they can still be used in exactly the same way. As Guttmann doubts that this is possible, he points out that it certainly cannot be the only memory and thus it cannot be the biological basis for the long-term memory either.

Another assumption is that the functions of learning are based in the macromolecules. This would mean that the DNA structure, which is not inherited, changes. But as the DNA structure is highly stable, this idea is very unlikely too. Another consideration is whether less stable ribonucleic acids might function as memories because every nerve activity may lead to an increase in the RNA metabolism.

Guttmann says that these events are certainly not evidence that RNA are actually involved in learning, but that this only shows that their concentration changes in accordance with the extent of activity in a nerve cell.

There are other theories as well, but altogether they do not yield any satisfactory explanation on how memory is structured and works. One gains exactly the impression that the brain must have if a guiding spirit actually exists, namely that the brain is a huge central control and switching system with certain clipboard functions.

It actually seems that spirit embodies and that during this embodiment an entire series of forces is developed which are responsible for bodily awareness and for many types of acquired behavior. Furthermore it is likely that the

embodied spirit is endowed with a spiritual structure (a kind of spiritual body - the soul), which determines the personality of a living being apart from its prime spiritual qualities. The spiritual and mental pattern could and most probably will determine which vital substances, according to the construction plans of the DNA, will be used and which ones disregarded.

My next consideration is meant to support my conviction that not everything can be as we have assumed so far:

Living beings develop from single-celled to multi-cellular organisms and subsequently to plants, animals and humans. Through reproduction of genetic substances, through mutation and natural selection thousands of species have developed.

Man most obviously developed out of some kind of monkey by taking the body of a monkey and becoming increasingly intelligent in the course of time. According to biological laws monkeys changed their genetic inventory through mutation and thus created an advantage in natural selection by adopting more intelligent behavior. Finally man's evolution had advanced so far that, when looking back on his development, we actually could consider him man and no longer monkey.

This sounds so logical that evidently nobody has realized so far that if it was *only* like that evolution would have to **repeat itself again and again**. Monkeys would repeatedly develop through mutation of their genetic substances, would behave more intelligently and finally would evolve into man. But this is exactly what does not happen!

Of course it can be said that coincidence plays a vital role. I would immediately agree with this argument if it were not for the fact that not only does the development from monkey to man not repeat itself, but also development of other creatures into other higher organisms. Why do fish always stay fish even though they change their appearance? Why are there no horses that can learn how to read and write, why no snakes which deal with philosophical questions and why no worms that produce cars?

We have to understand that most obviously **there are other factors involved in the development of organisms which have not yet been taken into account**.

If we consider the fact that living beings repeatedly change their appearance through mutation and natural selection, but nevertheless stay basically the same as they were, there is only one inevitable logical conclusion: **They are subject to certain conditions which they cannot overcome through evolution**.

In other words: All kinds of living beings always stay the same in their original nature. They can and have to adapt to their environment, but their innermost nature does not essentially change, because they are not able to develop beyond their limited frame.

So it is most likely that an original spirit actually exists, a spirit according to which a fish has to stay a fish, an insect stays an insect, a monkey stays a

monkey and man stays man. They adapt to their environment but basically they remain as they are.

A human could have a totally different body in another world, but still would stay a human. A fish might live without water in another world but still remain a fish, though in a body which allows existence on dry land, and the spirit active in elementary particles could still create atoms and molecular structures somewhere else which cannot be compared to those of this world.

It is difficult at this moment in time to answer the question of what spirit actually is and how it was formed. It occurs to me again and again that we should understand spirit in the sense of a type of information, but that is only an idea which comes to me and which may not be right. However, I am optimistic the humans after me will solve this question, will examine my statements and possibly also correct them. If at some stage there are many people researching in the right direction, many mysteries will be resolved where no light can be seen today. I hope that my research has taken a step in the right direction and has thus served my fellow humans.

Finally, please do not forget that it is human to err, and that the truth is not easy to find even for those who seek it. To me, it seems that the really important thing is to bear truthfulness and charity within oneself, and to always be prepared to reject that which we recognise as false.

Epilogue

In the course of my search for truth I have become firmly convinced that the spirit must be the basis of all existence.

According to scientists' observations this universe seems to be up to 15 billion years old and to consist of billions of galaxies. Each galaxy is estimated to comprise an average of about one hundred billion stars, and the number of planets and habitable worlds cannot even be estimated as they elude our observation. As our research is limited to this one universe, we cannot make any clear statements about how many other world systems exist. This universe, in which we live and which is only partially visible to us, has a beginning and one day may come to an end.

I agree with scientists' theories that our universe has developed from an »infinitely small point«, as spirit occupies no space and therefore seems to make it possible for an immense universe to originate from nothing. It is however obvious **that the origin of all existence must have been before the time of this universe**. In the infinity of being certain activities must have taken place at a specific point in time, which consequently brought about the origin of the universe.

Up to this day it has not been possible to explain according to which ideas and why this universe has come to exist. *However, it seems certain to me that our universe has not developed by mere chance. The basis for the origin and development of the universe must have been conceived and created by intelligent spirit. But more can only be said about it when we have learned more about spirit and have come to understand it better.* It is particularly useless and even harmful to make statements about Gods that have emanated from our current spiritual narrow-mindedness.

We only know the living beings of this world and consider it normal that humans are imperfect and think and act selfishly. But as I see things other worlds do exist which are inhabited by beings that are free of lies and malice and therefore are able to live together in harmony and charity. This world of ours is created in a way that allows humans of different characters to live together. In the worlds of the hereafter, however, only beings of a similar spiritual attitude seem to be able to dwell in the same spiritual sphere.

I consider it important to become aware of the existence of many diverse possibilities and to consequently give up our fixation with the constrictive ideas which certain religions have taught us. As long as we cling to supposed truths laid down in books we will not be able to find our path to greater spiritual freedom and will keep on guessing about life.

Certain knowledge also strongly depends on the time in which we live. In times that are determined by faith, it is very difficult for searchers of the truth to bring some light into the darkness of the many existing beliefs and theories. If we do not find anybody with a pronounced need for truthfulness, it is impossible for us to exchange and share our experiences with others and thus enrich each other mutually.

With their imagination of good and bad Gods, the people of ancient times were able to feel much better than we that there may actually be beings that are superior to humans both in knowing and doing, but are in the end not omnipotent or omniscient either. They also show us that they were able to see whether a being pretending to be a God was good or bad. Over the past several thousands of years this ability to tell good from bad seems to have got lost in many people, and it can easily be seen that many people consider beings as God that lie, are hypocritical, betray, murder and enslave.

Many people are obsessed with believing in Gods, giving them names and trying to find out whether they are male or female, and whether they wear a long beard or are good-looking. This way of thinking makes people get lost in appearances and they are easily deceived. With some knowledge of life we would be able to see that the truth is that we create »our truth« only according to experiences of this world and that »the truth« would be very different if we had access to other worlds of this or another universe. It is however a fact that this world is only inhabited by humans and that mankind has always had to cope without any direct help from any Gods. It may well be that the laws of nature help the Gods to guarantee that this world is maintained in its current form. But obviously the same Gods are not able to help individual people in specific situations. How could they be able to do so if they dwell in remote worlds and do not have a physical body?

We need not be unhappy about the fact that we always have access to a only very small part of reality – be it in this or any other world. But would we really benefit from knowing that before this universe several other world systems existed and that in other galaxies beings may be living several millions of years away that might look slightly different from us? The decisive thing is that we understand how to become happy in the world in which we live and are able to cope with the tasks and problems of this particular world.

Many people cannot understand how it is possible that on the one hand the universe follows laws of nature that seem to prove the existence of a divine spirit, but that on the other hand there is nobody who can be considered as a guardian of truth and justice. They think that there must be some beings that guide humans on their ways, help them out of difficult situations and call to account those who break certain rules. The reason for this is that we have far too little understanding of human beings and do not even perceive how impossible it is for us humans to be guided and nurtured from other worlds. Even if this was theoretically possible, such an attempt would soon lead to unbearable conflicts because most people in their mental immaturity just want to hear and accept what they personally consider to be good and true.

For beings from other worlds there are only two ways to control and influence our world: via the laws of nature or by influencing which spiritual beings are put into this world and when and where this happens. For certain people may be able to bring about new spiritual tendencies and thus may cause a change in the course of things.

Obviously our universe was created in such a way that we can pass into another world only through death. The distances between the galaxies, stars and planets are so huge that we will never be able to reach other habitable worlds. Those who still dream that one day it will be possible for people to merrily and

happily fly through space in spaceships for dozens, hundreds or even thousands of years know little about psychology and the limits of human resistance. Instead of indulging in such visions it would be better if we tried to cope with the problems of this world first, combated the poverty and misery of the many suffering and disadvantaged people and created through more humane, honest and noble behaviour a world in which love reigns rather than distrust and a predatory greed for more, which just brings suffering.

I have come to understand that most people living in our time are not willing to accept and cope with reality as it is. Although everyone seems to understand that all people have the same right to live a happy and peaceful life, this understanding does not play an important role in practice. In the general aberrations and confusion caused by beliefs, humans try to create a place of relative peace for themselves and their families in which they can live a happy and contented life. Many people have lost their will to find truthfulness, to reach an in-depth understanding of their lives and to live in a more modest and natural way. They look up to the powerful and the rich and try to obtain money and esteem in the same way as their supposed models.

It has extensively been described how the documents of the New Testament came into being and how unreasonable and selfish the commandments of the church are which were gradually compiled over the course of time. But as God's representatives appear in beautiful garments, are waited on and admired and live pleasantly at the expense of their flock, the many lies on which the construct of faith is based are readily accepted. Although it is well known that Christ was simply dressed, open-minded, honest and modest and never demanded money from anyone, we accept that reality has very little to do with the origins of Christianity.

Monarchs, emperors, kings, politicians, actors, managers and many other people have shown how it is possible to place themselves above ordinary people, how to obtain money and power and how to arrange everything nicely for themselves. And as everything they are and own looks beautiful and desirable, these people are imitated and admired.

Because in this aberrant mindset not everyone can become a millionaire or billionaire, many people choose crooked ways to obtain money, they become hypocrites, fraudsters, thieves or robbers, especially as they are very likely to get away with it. And those who do not have enough criminal energy try their luck with gambling in the hope of getting hold of money in this way.

Driven by egotism, people try to strip away as much as possible from the state, i.e. the community of people. Success and turnovers are the cornerstones of many managers, not the people to whom they give a job and a bit of fulfilment. And as nearly everyone thinks in that way, they mutually confirm this selfish attitude to each other. For when so many wolves are looking for prey, it seems to be reasonable and obvious to behave only in this and not in any other way.

To make people buy what they do not really need, enormous amounts of money are spent on advertising. In order to be given wings and take off we are suggested to buy a certain beverage whose price contains considerable costs for mental manipulation. An enormous range of products containing a great variety

of chemical additives is offered for our personal hygiene although a piece of naturally manufactured soap would remove dirt in a simpler, healthier and cheaper way. To follow the latest fashion, new clothes and shoes have to be bought although our wardrobes are full of garments which are neither torn nor worn out. Goods are transported thousands of kilometres although they would actually grow right in front of our very front door; animals are produced like goods and are treated in an abhorrently heartless way. How cruel and erring must people be who have lost any kind of sympathy and respect for animals and just think about the money they can make by selling them as cheap goods?

To make this system work, even children at primary schools are taught how to compete and be successful. As a result there is no room and time left to teach the children how to become more content, more responsible, more critical and freer human beings, how to solve conflicts and how to become happy members of human society. Some time, however, is reserved for the purposes of church propaganda although hardly any children are interested in the priests' lies and fairy tales.

It is amazing how for example Native Americans were able to survive until the arrival of their suppressors from Europe, even though they did not attend schools, own large corporations, build skyscrapers, pay homage to deviant arts, treated animals with respect, did not build nuclear weapons and did not have mobile phones.

To dominate and manage a society of takers, new institutions had to be created which were totally unknown to Native Americans. When something happened, the elders of their tribes were able to settle the matter using their common sense. Nowadays there are successful 'law factories' with vast experience which create laws for every bit of rubbish. To be able to apply this vast amount of laws, legal experts, judges, notaries, lawyers, tax consultants and more recently even computers have been necessary, as using the human brain is no longer sufficient to execute certain laws. Of course a police force is necessary too to arrest those who do not respect the laws; public prosecutors are needed for the conviction of the criminals and jails are required for the imprisonment of the offenders.

I do not consider the alleged herd instinct of the human to be the main problem but rather think that it is the predominant attitude to belief that makes people tend to adopt other people's behaviours while hardly questioning them. If God and his representatives demand belief in Him and His commands, if faith is considered to be sacred and if furthermore everything in daily life is aimed towards continuity, then it is no wonder that people behave in the ways we can observe. But if people learned from an early age that a knowledge of truth, of openness, truthfulness and kind-heartedness towards other people is decisive for their own good and for that of the community as a whole, then people would actually follow this way and create a completely different world.

We often gain the impression that it is 'cool' to be 'styled' according to a certain fashion, to put all kinds of chemical products on our faces, to have breasts made bigger, to arouse the other sex and to exhibit totally unnatural behaviour. How can young girls nowadays develop into polite and natural women who are beautiful both internally and externally if it is continuously shown to them that erotic radiance, sex and seduction are more effective? What is to

become of young men who are continuously exposed to action, violence, egotism and banality?

I myself have tried and experienced that it is possible to set up a company and be successful even when being open-minded, frank and modest. I have always been able to rely on the fact that I can continue my own spiritual path. Not a single time in my life did I have to make compromises, trick other people, lie to them or betray them. I have always respected my employees and have never begrudged them their success. I have never discriminated against female employees and have always been happy to let others participate in my success. Therefore nobody has ever had to come to me to ask for a pay rise.

As Yahweh, that strange desert god, is said to have created woman out of a man's rib, women have been disadvantaged in many ways up to this day. I have never understood why female employees should be paid less than male ones if they are equally intelligent and do the same job. This is just another example of how reckless businesspeople, following the beliefs which they have been brought up on, discriminate against people and how many of them just think about maximising their profits.

The list of unreasonable actions that are taken on behalf of belief is endlessly long and I could give many more examples. However, I would like to leave it at showing where belief without knowledge of truth and without true knowledge of life may actually lead and how much people can lie to themselves and betray themselves through their beliefs. It is no use demonstrating what is good and what is bad. If one really wants to know it is easy to see what is true and good and what is actually untrue or bad. Or do we really have to explain that for example terrorism in the world cannot be combated by counter-terrorism but only by mutual understanding, respect and dialogue?

Of course I am well aware of the fact that we live in a world of contrasts and that discrimination, injustice, suffering and pain are and will always be an integral part of our life on earth. This world is obviously meant to give every person the opportunities to evolve that are needed to learn and to gain experience from one's own spiritual attitude. It is no use expecting that everyone will become noble and good if the general spiritual attitude improves. Different spiritual and mental properties and characters can only be changed for the better with a lot of patience on the part of all parties involved. But if there is good will, if humans use their mental abilities for the sake of the true and the good, this world will make big spiritual steps forward and will lose some of its darkness.

Without an in-depth understanding of life humans will always err and will keep causing pain and suffering because of their errors. Without hope for a better world, without knowledge of the ideals of truth, without justice and charity, people develop who have no goal in their lives and who live without hope, poor creatures who have doubts about the meaning of life and who end up in despair.

We may criticise, praise, pray and sacrifice, but in fact all of this has no value. It is good that we all have to decide for ourselves how and where we want to live. And it is good that we cannot continuously keep turning to some superior authority with our demands or protests. Everyone can choose to follow his or her own path to truth, or may also follow a path of lies, malice, deceit and

selfishness. No God can and will ever break the will of a human being, because a person's spiritual attitude can only be changed through their own free will.

We all create our own heaven or hell through our way of thinking. For this no Gods are necessary. Those who tend towards lies and hypocrisy create their own inner world which corresponds to their way of thinking and which depending on the degree of their malice may eventually turn into hell. Those who follow the path of truth, who detest lies, who are sincere and frank, gradually create their own illuminated and peaceful inner world. After disappearing from this world we all take our inner world with us and join a world that corresponds to our spiritual attitude. A last judgement in the hereafter is neither necessary nor intended for that.

We must stop thinking that we all have a delegation of good spirits at our disposal that will take care of everything and will protect each of us from harm. I have already said that every person is given the opportunity to gain experiences, even or maybe specifically those people who have gone too far astray in their beliefs and do things that harm other people. Evil can also help good people to gain experiences that may be of importance for their further path of life. For we live in a world of contrasts, in a great school that offers us a vast variety of occasions to obtain experience.

When the will of a living being creates a reality, it always starts with a visual image. Everything comes into being and decays due to the will of the spirit. In the same way as we humans first imagine and then build a house, living beings can imagine worlds and make them exist by mere imagination. In media reports it is frequently described how spirit works, for example in the *Factual Report*: "The creative acts of every being that lives consciously and is capable of understanding and does not have an earthly body – that means in the hereafter – takes place directly through its thoughts. A creative spiritual being does not need hands or tools, for its knowledge has a direct impact on even the smallest spirit and creates the forms and effects which are inherent in its consciousness and are expressed by its will. The greater a being's capacity to think and the more this being understands, the more it is able to create."

Unlike a religious person, a truthful, open-minded and frank person will never demand belief in any theories but will just communicate their own knowledge and thus provoke thought. The knowledge of life cannot be swallowed like a pill; it cannot be laid down in books and offered as the truth because everyone has to work it out for him- or herself. The path to truthfulness is a process of internal maturity, a long road which requires a strong will for the good. A religious, selfish, dishonest and hypocrite person cannot realize truth and cannot reach the illuminated world of a free spirit because such a person's own belief creates an impenetrable fog.

Free human beings who feel obliged to the truth do not force anybody to adopt a certain opinion or belief. Truthful people just want to be met with openness, frankness and love and want other people to be willing to prefer truth to lies and to think and act like truthful people. Their striving for freedom is an expression of their tendency not to bind themselves to appearances. They use the goods that are available to them and willingly give away what they can do without. Such truthful people are guided by models that are known to have followed truth and have acted for the sake of charity.

Really good people do not move in spheres that are totally detached from humanity. They rather do everything in their power to alleviate the sorrow and the pain of their fellows. Detaching oneself from others and shining in the light of one's own supposed illumination may be pleasant, but helping people in need, comforting them and fighting against the roots of ignorance is much greater and more necessary. True inner peace is only found by those who consider any form of adoration, praise, transfiguration, secrecy, or ceremonies etc. as imperfect and thus decidedly reject them.

I finally wish all my fellows that one day they will realize, just like myself, that a peaceful life in communion with others is only possible when living according to the principles of truth and charity. Truth is not the property of a single individual. Truth is a concept just as a lie is a concept which is nobody's property either. Everyone is able to be truthful just as everyone is able to lie. It depends on a person's spiritual attitude whether a person follows the truth or prefers lying and pretending. *So please never let yourself be blinded by allegedly great theories or ideas. It is always the human being who decides which attitude to adapt and which path to follow.*

We should always remember that we live in a world of contrasts which every day exposes us to problems that are difficult to cope with. The related efforts and disappointments are a burden to our soul which depresses us. Of course souls experience uplifting moments too, but these happy moments are rare. Therefore we should at least learn from these difficulties to make sure that our life has not been in vain and so that we can pass over to a world of love, peace, harmony and happiness after our departure.

Those who really want to believe that everything is just mere coincidence will after their death come to a world that corresponds to their own spiritual attitude. These individuals will not be prepared for what is to come and thus will need a long time to understand that they no longer live on Earth. I, however, do hope that nobody will be that unwise and that those people who really want to persist in their beliefs will obtain at least some information that after leaving this world will make them help realize their way upwards.

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Please understand that it is not possible to provide a complete list of all the books and essays I have studied and which have finally yielded my view of the world. For a more detailed study of the subject please refer to comprehensive literature existing on the topic.